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Pastoral and Personal Evangelism

WORKS BY

Charles L. Goodell, D.D.

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Pastoral and Personal Evangelism

By
CHARLES L. GOODELL, D.D.

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To
my dear friend

John S. Huyler,
New York City.

PREFACE

I AM led by the importunity of my brethren in the ministry to send forth this book which contains the heart of the messages which I have been giving throughout the country for the last two years. The welcome which that message has received would make it a delight to me to answer the manifold calls for its proclamation, but the exacting pastorate of a great church makes that impossible, save in a limited way. I therefore solicit the type to carry my message beyond the possibilities of the living voice.

Evangelism is the aggressive propaganda of the Christian life; and a particular phase of it is the burden of this book. While recognizing the value of those great historic movements called revivals, led for the most part by great evangelists like Wesley, Whitefield, Finney, Moody, and others who still labour among us, we are especially desirous of laying the emphasis of evangelistic service upon that great company of faithful men who are the pastors of our churches, and upon that fellow-

ship of noble laymen who are their associates and supporters in the great work of conserving the Christian life of the community and building up the Church of God.

Let no word of mine be construed as a depreciation of the earnest men who are accredited among us as faithful evangelists, but the special plea we make is for pastoral evangelism—the plea that every pastor should stir up the evangelistic gift which is in him, and make full proof of his ministry in this regard. Our need is not a hundred professional evangelists, but a hundred thousand consecrated pastors who will shepherd their own flock and gather their own lambs into the fold.

We seek in these chapters to give both inspiration and method, so that every hesitating pastor may find the courage to undertake this greatest and most satisfying work,—the winning of souls. The book is for the most part a record of fact and conviction wrought out in the thick of the fight, and it is sent out with the hope that it may be a cheer and a bugle blast both to those already in the lists and to those who have yet not dared to throw themselves into the battle with holy abandon.

Herein is also found inspiration for the great

work in the Sunday-school. Sane and approved methods are presented which it is believed will multiply incalculably the efficiency of this greatest agency for the growth of the Christian Church. We also make an earnest plea, supported by effective methods, for outdoor evangelism in city and country. In this connection our thanks are due to Funk & Wagnalls and Eaton & Mains for permission to republish some articles originally published in the *Homiletic Review* and *Sunday-School Journal*.

Equally with pastoral evangelism we wish to lay emphasis upon the personal method of reaching men. This we apply both to the ministry and the laity. Here will be found a key to the religious situation. The Church was begun by personal work. It must be carried forward by the same method.

We sound the note of self-denying service, a challenge to every Christian in pulpit and in pew. Pentecosts are bending low. They will fall with old-time force upon any who will make the old-time consecration. To this end we invoke the Holy Spirit and the enduement of power.

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I

THE PRESENT CALL

THE statistics of Conferences and Synods for the last ten years have not been pleasant reading for those who long to see the advance of the visible Church of God. The percentage of increase in Protestantism in the last decade has been the smallest of any decade in a hundred years. There has been much heart-searching on the part of ministers and laity, and the dawn of a better day glows already in the East. We are coming to understand that the chief obstacles to the spread of vital Christianity are not of the head but of the heart. The amount of time given to apologetics in book and pulpit is out of all proportion to the relative importance of the theme. The supreme questions are not of theology but of religion. It is life and not theory which fronts us. "The secret of the Lord" is not with those that speculate but "with them that fear Him." Is not the record of Christianity for two millenniums her best defense? Why then should she not march to the conquest of the

world rather than withdraw her forces and accept a siege?

It is not enough to fold our hands and ask God for help. The voice of God to Moses is His voice to us: "Wherefore criest thou unto Me? Speak unto the children of Israel that they go forward."

The message of the hour is not the critical, it is the evangelistic message. President MacKenzie of Hartford has well said,—"Evangelism is the only true regenerative of the human heart, the only real cleanser of the life of a nation."

We have been passing through a period of testing. For a time it looked to many that the foundations were being moved, but the investigations of reverent scholarship have been productive of great good and in matters of Biblical interpretation we stand upon firmer foundations than ever. It is heartening to note how few are moved by the questionings of the so-called "new theology" in England. The attention of the scholarly is being devoted now as never before to the great underlying questions of Christian philosophy and that, too, with a reverent mind. Now we are to make use of the accredited facts of scholarship

in the proclamation of the truth. We are able to speak with greater authority and with deeper conviction. Since the testing of our weapons has proven them to be of celestial temper, it behooves us now to use them with a stout arm and a mighty faith.

Nothing makes so great a drain upon one's powers as evangelistic service. The spiritual, intellectual and physical requirements are most exacting. He who would preach a crucified Christ must himself be a crucified man. His Master's spirit of unselfish service must dominate his soul. A winner of men must be a lover of men. The evangelistic heart must precede the delivery of the evangelistic message. Professor Winchester truly says, "We hear people talking sometimes about a love for souls as if they might cherish that sort of pious regard for people otherwise very disagreeable to them. But I don't know that I care very much that a man should love my soul unless he loves me." "He never came into my shop," said a Glasgow blacksmith of Dr. Norman McLeod, "without talking to me as if he had been a blacksmith all his life; but he never went away without leaving Christ in my heart." The present call is for a tender spirit

of personal concern, and it is also a call for personal conviction of the truth we preach. In an art shop in Paris I saw a little bronze that embodied to me a great thought. It was a statue of a knight of the olden times. He was clad in linked mail. His good sword was at his side. His pose was one of conscious strength and his face was aglow with intensity of purpose. He held before him a scroll which bore for its legend the single word "CREDO." The lesson is not far to seek. It is only when a man can say, "I believe" that he amounts to much in awakening faith in other men. If we urge men to enthrone Christ in their hearts we must ourselves believe in His universal triumph.

Robertson of Brighton used to say, "My inclinations are all one way, but my convictions are all another," and he was true to his convictions. It is not pleasant to do downright pastoral work. It is often a burden both to the flesh and to the spirit, but the call of God leaves no doubt as to our duty.

The emphasis of the hour is not on theology or doctrine of any sort. It is on life. Doctrine is only the skin of truth, there may be no life in it. It is only when a living soul is

behind truth that it has power. In the old castle at Warwick you will see the dented helmet and breastplate of Oliver Cromwell. It is but a useless relic and only the fussy caretaker keeps it from the gnawing tooth of Time. But once the good round head of Oliver was under that helmet and his stout heart beat under that breastplate. Then there was power in them and thundering down upon Dunbar to the shout, "Let God arise and let His enemies be scattered" they were invincible. We are to preach religion rather than theology, and to preach it not as theory but as life and a living process. Our fathers spoke of *experiencing* religion and in that word whole volumes are condensed. There was daily growth in grace, new and delightful experiences of spiritual power, so that every pulsebeat proclaimed a life that was militant and eager. It is worth while to consort with a man of that sort whether in the ministry or out of it.

The call is for the practical application of Christian life where it is most needed,—in the round of daily life. I make a plea for the revival of home religion, for the setting up of a family altar. We are too busy now for family

prayers but Martin Luther used to say, "Prayer and provender hinder no man in his journey." We are off to business and the children go to school without the uplift of spiritual communion. The tender supplication which made us strong is heard no longer and we go out alone to the temptations of life. No evangelism can be better than that which had its centre in the home circle and was as continuous as the recurrence of morning and night. A solicitude, punctuated with tears, is not soon forgotten and many who strayed into a far country are brought back to home and God by the steady tug of a love which never failed.

In our Church work the call of the hour is for something that will bridge the chasm between the institutional and the spiritual. Many Churches have adopted so-called institutional methods with only partial success. Their leaders are frank to say that men have come to their good citizenship meetings but would not come to their religious services. They would use their bowling alleys and billiard tables but not their pews. While it is doubtless better to have such games in connection with the Church than in connection

with the saloon, all will agree that the aim of the Church is not fully reached when it becomes simply a purveyor of amusement. The nexus between the game-room and the prayer-room is a soulful Christian, pastor or layman, whose steady personal solicitude makes the institutional to take on a spiritual meaning and so become an inspiration to a better life.

The imperative call is for Christian enthusiasm. "Ian Maclaren," who has but lately passed into that unseen holy towards which all men hasten, and who will not be accused of thoughtless intensity, has left for us a message we do well to heed: "A man may be keen about many interests, but of all things he ought to be keenest about religion. We are indulgent to enthusiasm in many departments. . . . Why should polite tolerance for any man's hobby harden into persecution when his mania is the Kingdom of God? Why should a gladiator be sane and St. Paul be mad? Ah, the reason is not obscure. What is eccentricity but motion from a different centre? . . . If any one believes that the Kingdom of God will remain when this world has disappeared like a shadow, then he is right to

fling away all that he possess and himself, too, for its advancement and victory."

We have come to a fateful hour. The battle is on and before the smoke of it lifts there will be a Waterloo either for the hosts of darkness or for the people of God. We must join issue with ease, indifference, materialism, skepticism, and outbreaking sin. If we are heartless and laggard the ancient curse which fell out of heaven will smite us full in the face: "Curse ye Meroz, said the angel of the Lord. Curse ye bitterly the inhabitants thereof; because they came not to the help of the Lord, to the help of the Lord against the mighty."

Such then is the present call and the chapters which follow will unfold the preparation which we need, the possibilities of the glorious victory, and the high price which must be paid for the holy triumph.

II

PASTORAL EVANGELISM

THE greatest price in the winning of souls must be paid in pastoral service. Bishops before conferences and candidates, and lecturers before our theological schools, exalt the work of the preacher to the first place, and the student is led to believe that his pulpit ministration is the main and almost the only thing in his ministry. There is no immediate danger that there will be too high a grade of preaching. The fathers used to talk about "beaten oil for the sanctuary" and by that they meant that the preacher's lamp should be fed by that which had cost him holy toil.

There are two words, however, which are greater than preacher. We are not called into the pulpit but into the *ministry* and we are *pastors* rather than preachers. To preach is one of the duties of the ministry but it is only one. The only sense in which it is the chief function of the ministry is the sense in which St. Francis of Assisi understood it. Turning

to a young brother in the ministry he said, "Let us go down into the town and preach." They passed through the market and along the chief squares and avenues. Then coming to the hill leading up to the monastery his companion said, "When shall we begin to preach?" St. Francis answered, "We have been preaching all the time." The preaching of the pulpit is likely to be too remote from the congregation both as to place and thought. In some way we must get to the people. Webster said, "If a lawyer were perched as high in the air and as far off from the jury as the minister was from his people a century ago he would not win a case in a lifetime." But it needs closer contact with the people than that which the pulpit offers to win men to Christ. Dr. J. O. Peck, himself one of the most successful soul winners which the pastorate of the last generation produced, has left a testimony which every preacher ought to know by heart. Said he, "If it were revealed to me from heaven by the archangel Gabriel that God had given me the certainty of ten years of life and that as a condition of my eternal salvation I must win a thousand souls to Christ in that time, and if it were further con-

ditioned to this end that I might preach every day for the ten years but might not personally appeal to the unconverted outside the pulpit, or that I might not enter the pulpit during those ten years but might exclusively appeal to individuals, I would not hesitate one moment to accept the choice of personal effort as the sole means to be used in securing the conversion of ten thousand souls as the condition of my salvation."

Throughout his ministry the writer's practice has been to follow up the revival sermon by pastoral visitation, devoting to that purpose the afternoon of each day. He has gone to those families where there were unconverted and urged their presence at the services. Where the unconverted have been present at the meetings but have made no movement towards Christ a few words spoken under the guidance of the Spirit in a heart-to-heart talk in the privacy of the home have led to quick and complete surrender. On more than one occasion, going with the mill owner or the manufacturer through his estate, the placing of a hand that trembled with concern upon the rich man's shoulder, and the question, "What shall it profit a man if he gain the

whole world and lose his own soul" has sent an arrow of conviction to a sure place, and kneeling among merchandise he has more than once seen a pauper spiritually become a millionaire. We have no disposition to make light of the tremendous drain of such work upon the heart and soul. One feels after a day of such work in some humble measure as his Master felt when He perceived virtue had gone out of Him, and if he does his work successfully he will find that only his Master's preparation of prayer will make it possible for him to go. Alas that so many who claim to be followers of the Master should share so little in His self-denial. What paupers that day will disclose which measures the gift of glory according to our share in His sufferings. We were not called to the delights of literary leisure, nor to the function of critics in poetry or art. The call that comes to us has long echoed in the world. To Augustine it meant a life for the captive Angles; to Boniface it meant the sacrifice of all preferment to help the heathen natives in the wilds of Germany. Because of that call Oberlin went forth among the Vosges, and Edwards and Eliot among the Indians of New England. This is too fast

company for our weighted feet to keep. The Valhalla of the eleventh of Hebrews is not for men who are at ease in Zion. There is a great cry coming up from the churches. We are not keeping pace with the growth of our land. May it not be true that one reason is to be found in the fact that increased wealth has made the Church less careful for the spiritual needs of others and less ready to meet the self-denial which the fathers welcomed. An old saying is often misquoted. We hear it said, "Like priest like people." But it was the statement of a truth which explained an ancient deflection when it read as originally uttered, "Like people like priest." There is room for great heart-searching on the part of the Christian ministry to-day. We must not walk the path of dalliance. The price of it will be another apostasy more terrible than any which has shaken the Church. Nothing will give the ministry power like self-denying service. It is true for every preacher as it was of Christ, that the bearing of the cross gave Him power to draw men unto Him.

We talk about winning the *age* to Christ, as if the *age* was anything except as it is made up of the individual. It seems a long way

and a toilsome one,—the winning of men individually to Christ. Drummond reminds us of a fact we have sometimes forgotten. "Every atom in the universe can act on every other atom but only through the atom next it. And if a man would act upon every other man he can do so best by acting, one at a time, upon those beside him." We are looking for a Constantine to make the world Christian by an edict. What kind of a Christian will an edict make? Ask history. There is no way of success but the irksome way of personal appeal and personal surrender.

It is objected that the pastor cannot attend to such details. The answer is, such matters are his first concern. A few less meetings to organize charitable institutions and a little more time spent in making such institutions unnecessary might be wisdom in the sight of God. A little less time in the purely social and a little more time in the purely spiritual might be in the interest of a wise fraternity If a rich man should invite thee to his banquet wouldst thou not go? How much rather give the same time to leading a famishing soul to the feast which will never cloy or cease.

Here then is the day which some pastors

have found marvellously blest of God. An early rising, that the soul may greet its Lord. A forenoon spent in prayerful, hopeful preparation for the evening service. An afternoon spent, not in formal calls but in calls for a purpose, in homes where one leaves the feeling that he was sent of God. In the evening the presentation of the message prepared in the morning. An after-service of tender persuasion, concluding with the happy testimony of saved men and women. Such a day is strenuous enough for both soul and body. It would be impossible to keep it up month after month, but so long as God gives the power of body and soul to do it it will accomplish wonders for a church. It was after such a day as I have described that Benjamin M. Adams, quaint old hero of God, wrote to Miss Warner telling the story of his toil and ended it with the words "One more day's work for Jesus." Many a man after such a day has been able to say with the poetess "His love and light fill all my soul to-night."

The effect upon the community of such devotion on the part of the pastor cannot be overestimated. There is little probability that any worldly official will stand in the way of

such consecration. In a varied ministry we have never found any who would oppose, and very few who would not throw all their energy into the work. The pastor's word will not be one of fault-finding. That is rarely successful in stirring a church to religious activity. He will find the warm word of invitation better than the sandbag of denunciation. It will seem to him that some good angel has prepared the way in the hearts of his own people. It is not in human nature to stand unmoved when a man throws himself, body and soul, into the breach for God. The people see their pastor at his work, early and late; they know of the agony of his soul; they see the marks of it in his face; they come to believe with him that it is a time of holy crisis; that whatever rest may come in the season for rest now is the Waterloo of God or the devil, and it is time for every Blucher to bring up his reserve. The whole church is surcharged with interest and this begets interest in the entire community.

It will seem to many that I have set a high price upon the winning of souls, but it is the price that has been paid in all the ages since Jesus set us our example and went to His

cross. It is enough that His disciple be as his Lord. I know of no man who has been anointed to preach for God who has not walked a path of toil and self-denial hot enough to blister his feet. The price of great victories is great surrender,—surrender of ease, of natural inclination, of everything that interferes with the one great thing we do. Men do not become saints in their sleep. Pastors do not witness great revivals by simply wishing for them. The only royal road is the one which bears the mark of a pierced foot. The light which lights the world is a burning as well as a shining one. As the oil wastes the flame aspires. It is worth while to be consumed with the ardour of our devotion if only we may light the world.

III

THE PRICE OF POWER

He who adventured farthest to save the lost and in whose footsteps every minister of His must seek to walk, has fastened a message with a nail of His cross in the path He trod and these are its words:—"If any man would come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross and follow Me."

Edwin Markham in "The Desire of Nations" pictures the coming of the Christ and thrills us with His message:—

> "And He will say—the King—
> Come let us *live* the poetry we sing!
> And these His burning words will break the ban—
> Words that will grow to be
> On continent, on sea,
> The rallying cry of man."

With the cry of a measureless want in our ears, and the sight of stolid men, not a few, who say, "no man hath cared for my soul," it is time for each pulpit to challenge every other, "Come, let us *live* the gospel we preach!"

If we are to have power with God and with men, we must pay the price in self-denying service. Jowett was right when he said,—"When we cease to bleed, we cease to bless." Dr. Stevenson tells the legend of the Chinese potter who would make a vase of surpassing beauty and fire the colours so that they should be unchanged through all the ages and unsurpassed in beauty. One degree of heat after another disappointed him. One substance after another failed to bring the colour he sought. Faint and discouraged, he threw himself in despair into the fire of his furnace, and so strange was the effect of his immolation that colours unknown before and beautiful beyond compare were revealed in the finished vase, and they are yet the wonder of the ages. So the maker found his immortality. All this is but a legend, but our Master gives us a message which is not a legend nor yet a parable. We are trying to kindle spiritual fires which shall make a product fit to mirror to all the ages the features of our blessed Lord. Can anything surpass the thrill of the message to his workmen:—"He that loveth his life loseth it; and he that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal." No man's lips

ever demanded of his followers such service as do the lips of Jesus. The Bible is a book of heroes and has the making of heroes in its holy sacramentum.

There is a lesson for us in the first humiliation that the disciples suffered when they faced in their impotency an anxious father and his suffering son: "I spake to Thy disciples that they should cast out this dumb spirit and they could not," and Jesus took him by the hand and raised him up; and he arose. And when He was come into the house His disciples asked Him privately, "How is it that we could not cast it out," and He said, "This kind can come out by nothing save by prayer." The message with which Jesus thrilled His disciples was passed on by them to their successors. Hear the old soldier, Paul, as the time draws near when he must lay off his armour and hand down his sword to the youthful Timothy: "I charge thee in the sight of God and of Christ Jesus who shall judge the living and the dead, and by His appearing and His kingdom, preach the Word; be urgent in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with all long-suffering and teaching. . . . Be thou sober in all things,

suffer hardship, do the work of an evangelist, *fulfill* thy ministry." How the heart of the writer of the letter to the Hebrews burns with holy zeal as he thinks of the heroes in God's Temple of Fame! "And what shall I more say? for the time would fail me to tell of Gideon and of Barak, and of Samson, and of Jephtha, of David also, and Samuel, and of the prophets; who through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, . . . and others had trials of mockings, and scourgings, yea moreover of bonds and imprisonment; they were stoned, they were sawn asunder, they were tempted, they were slain with the sword; they went about in sheepskins, in goatskins, being destitute, afflicted, ill-treated, of whom the world was not worthy. . . . Therefore let us also, seeing that we are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us." We cannot possibly run with these worthies unless the Lord God Almighty shall quicken us for the race.

John the Revelator saw the company of the saved. He learned that there were three rea-

sons for their victory. The first was, "The blood of the Lamb." They were saved men,—glad recipients of the atonement of Calvary. The second reason named is, "The word of their testimony." They had lived a life that was pure enough to last forever, and they bore testimony to His keeping power and went everywhere persuading men to share their bliss through the same adorable Lord. The third reason he gives is that they "held not their lives dear unto themselves." We may be certain that anything less than a complete surrender of our powers to God will not pass muster. What right have we to keep company with the scarred and weary veterans who come home victorious,—we who have worked with our hand upon our pulse lest we should stir ourselves into unwonted activity? The epitaph of such is likely to be, "He died of too much self-control." If we are to have any place whatever in that noble company who are heralded to the ages as "Overcomers," we must have some scars of our own and an honest story of self-denial and agonizing service for our Master's sake. It was such a hero that Bunyan sends up to his Gates: "Mr. Valiant for Truth said, 'I am going to my

Father; and though with great difficulty I am got hither, yet now *I do not repent me of all the trouble I have been at to arrive where I am.* My sword I give to him that shall succeed me in my pilgrimage, and my courage and skill to him that can get it. *My marks and scars I carry with me to be a witness for me that I have fought His battles who will now be my rewarder.*' When the day that he must go hence was come, many accompanied him to the riverside, into which, as he went, he said, 'Death, where is thy sting?' and as he went down deeper, he said, 'Grave, where is thy victory?' So he passed over, and all the trumpets sounded for him on the other side."

I know the yearning of my brethren in the ministry, and I am bound to say that no age in the history of the church has had a more devoted company of pastors than those who now fill the Christian pulpits of America. I have personally conversed with thousands of them in all parts of our land, and my heart goes out to them. Many would pay any price for spiritual victory, if only they could be assured that the price would avail. Speaking at Northfield before hundreds of ministers, nothing so moved my own heart as the eager,

almost pathetic, faces of the men who were in middle life or beyond. I felt I had a message for them, and I could hardly master myself as I spoke words which I venture to repeat here:

"I am looking into the faces of many who have passed into middle life. The dew is gone; the hot sun is beating down; you have learned many things about the world by bitter experiences; you are wiser but you are sadder men. Do you remember when you first went into the pulpit to preach? You have not quite forgotten how your knees shook as you went up the stairs and how the desire to win men burned in your soul. Then if you learned of a wayward soul, you would travel all day to seek and save it. But the ardour of the first experience has paled now; it comes no more. Preachers say to me, 'What are we to do about it?' Well, it is a sad hour in a man's life when his first zeal has spent its force and no new incentive has taken its place. That is the time when many clergymen go into semi-religious things. They become agents and promoters, secretaries and presidents, and try to create a new interest in life. But if you must stay in the ministry, there is only one

thing for you. You must get a new vision. If any of you feels that he has reached the deadline by reason of his years, I wish to assure you that there is no reason in the world why these years should not be the brightest, happiest years in all your ministry. You ought to do better work for God than ever in the past. But hear me when I say that in order to make that true you must pay the full price in toil and surrender to God. I went out quite early this morning to your little Round Top. There are two graves there. They are the graves of kindred hearts. 'They were lovely and pleasant in their lives, and in death they are not divided.' One is the grave of Dwight Moody,—the other is the grave of his faithful wife. 'As his part is that goeth down to the battle, so shall his part (her part) be that tarrieth by the stuff.' That sweet woman in the sight of God is to be credited with a share in the victories that came to the stout heart to whom she gave courage and for whom she never ceased to pray. I noticed that this strong man had died at what Oliver Wendell Holmes calls 'the grand climacteric of life,'—sixty-two years of age. Nature made him a fine animal and built his heart to

run for at least fourscore years and ten, but his heart took on the cares of this world so greatly and throbbed so terribly under them that it shook its tabernacle to pieces at sixty-two. Now, brothers, D. L. Moody preferred to die in the saddle rather than to die by the fire. While I have no brief to shorten ministers' lives, I want to say that the best we can do is to put all there is of us into this work without regard to years. Let us put a new meaning into the epicurean motto, 'While we live, let us live.'"

I read not long ago the history of the early preachers of the Methodist Church. In the first generation of the Methodist preachers in New England and New York the average length of ministerial service when they came to die was eight years. They burned themselves out in eight short years. They lived so earnestly for God and wrought so well that in eight years their lives had gone out by the stress of their toil. But you know, dear friends, that the tables of the actuaries show us that now the ministers are the best risks in the world. They live longer than any other class of men, and there are people on the outside who say that we ministers are not only

underpaid, but that we are underworked. Of course they do not know or they would not say that. I was speaking to some labouring men the other day and I told them that I was greatly interested in this matter of "eight hours a day." That I was so much pleased with the idea that I had put two of those days into every twenty-four hours from the time I entered the ministry. And those labouring men were not quite sure whether what I had said would help or hurt their cause. I am convinced that men need to see that there is no toil of theirs that we will not undertake; that we will crack our sinews over the hard problems of life, and are willing to share their burdens anywhere and everywhere.

IV

THE UNEXPECTED HARVEST

It is quite the fashion for ministers and churches to look over the condition of things about them, to enumerate all the adverse circumstances, to take notice of the indifference of church members and the ungodliness of the people, and then to say in their hearts, "We are not ripe for a revival. It would be of no use to undertake special services. Months or years of preparation will be necessary to bring this community into a place where any harvest of grace may be reasonably expected." Every age has its prophets of the deluge and they have figures to show for it. Statistics prove that drunkenness and other vices are on the increase, and therefore sin is about to overwhelm the community. There are terrible evils in national life, in politics, in trade, in social affairs, and they are certain to overwhelm us. Many years ago the awful evils of immigration were discussed in the pulpit and we have been discussing them ever since, prophesying all the while the dire disasters

that were to come through immigration to our people. In the chapel of Plymouth Church a letter from one of the greatest Englishmen of the last generation is framed, in which he utters his threnody over us as a lost nation. But the head of our Bureau of Immigration is now telling us that the gain which comes thus to our country is immeasurably greater than any peril which we face, and as we look over our country which has met the perils of immigration for a hundred years and has so overcome them that the country is richer and nobler than any other land that the sun shines on, we are fain to believe that he has told us the truth.

So in the work which we undertake in the kingdom of God there are results out of all proportion to time and labour thus spent upon them, and in spite of all evils which yet multiply among us, that come unexpectedly and gloriously into our lives. We do well to remember the words of Jesus, spoken in the spring-time in Samaria,—"Say ye not there are yet four months and then cometh harvest? Behold, I say unto you, lift up your eyes and look on the fields, for they are white already for the harvest." The affirmation is that in

spiritual processes God is a careless time-keeper, that harvests fall out of the sky that never slumbered in the furrow, and many a hope bursts full blossom on the thorny stem of time. We do not always remember that all men have a capacity for religion. It is in them already, we do not have to plant it. They may be in bondage to meaner thoughts, but all have hidden somewhere noble purposes and aspirations. There is the sense of God, of duty, of accountability, and of a future dependent upon themselves. There is capacity and a felt need. Let us remember all this and not be over much discouraged when the things that are seen seem to smite us in the face. Granted that there is a dearth of those appearances which precede spiritual harvest. Nevertheless let us take down our sickles and be sure that they are sharp. The Samaritan country was in the spring, but the Samaritan people were ready to be harvested. Could anything be more unlikely than that? Look at the vision which fronted Jesus. A woman of abandoned life and a people so like herself that she had not seriously lost caste among them by her deflection from virtue. On the morning of that day there seemed to be no

more hope of harvest in the lives of that people than there would be to-day in an East-side brothel. But before night there were sheaves a plenty among the Samaritans; and the same may be true for us. Get ready for the harvest, O reapers of God.

"Some hearts may brood upon the past,
But ours with smiling futures glisten.
Lo, now the dawn breaks up the sky.
Lean out your soul and listen."

There are many fields in which this truth of the unexpected harvest should gladden our souls. Well has Dr. Watkinson said,—"We instruct our children and seek to encourage them, but are surprised if they evidence anything like a religious experience. A child may not understand theology, but it can enjoy religion. Go to the child at once with a spiritual appeal and expect the spiritual effect. Do not talk of their need of experience. Give them a chance, and you will be surprised to see what wonderful fruit they will bear." Looking out into any community, at the average men and women that compose it, and the outlook is not hopeful. But a glance at history will open our eyes, as the eyes of the

prophet's servant were opened, to the armies of God that fight unnoticed in our behalf. Who could have thought in the days of the Humanists that society would ripen faster in a year than it had in a century before, and that the preaching of one lone friar would in three weeks make a wicked city penitent and lead its inhabitants to build bonfires of their unholy books and images in the market-place? For that matter, we have a history more ancient still, in that a great city repented in sackcloth, almost in a moment, under the preaching of him who had so lately been a renegade prophet. Let the miracle of Nineveh encourage any man's heart to-day. Who that reads history could have thought when Bunyan went to jail that in a few short years Puritanism would have conquered one continent and built another? In the days of the Wesleys many a mob that had come to break their heads became in a single hour broken-hearted and penitent. The church is saying it is no use to expect results in our cities, sodden with wealth and intoxicated with pleasure. In that we do but dishonour our Lord. One sight of Jesus transformed the publican, and Zaccheus was converted somewhere between the tree-limb

and the ground. We will insist that there is too much of scepticism and that a generation must elapse before it can be controverted and annihilated. Paul's scepticism was as strong and as well founded as any of ours is likely to be, but it went out under a single flash of light. One of the greatest atheists of Germany was converted through the simple question, "Was your mother also an atheist?" We who have worked much among the debauched and the depraved ought never to be unexpectant of a harvest, for have we not seen scores of men who came into church too drunk to understand, go out sober and saved? In the case of the individual it is hard to disabuse our minds of the idea that conversion is always the result of long meditation, that one weakness and another must be overcome, one sin and another must be given up, one truth and another must be lodged in the soul, and then after four months or four years cometh the harvest. But the transforming power of a new affection may burst upon the soul already prepared by the Providence of God and the man who has sown the seed may yet become the reaper even while he sows.

I cannot do better than quote the words of

Dr. Watkinson: "Do you ask where the ripening forces are? They have done their work already. The sun acts where it does not shine. The roots of trees are vitalized by the sunshine, although they are not bathed in it; nay, gems hidden in the rock are said to owe their form to solar radiations. So in the kingdom of souls the light acts where it does not manifestly shine. Go to the youngest child, the most illiterate peasant, the most abandoned sinner, the most benighted pagan, and expect forthwith glorious fruit. We are not waiting for God, God is waiting for us, and the harvest is spoiling through our sloth and unbelief."

V

THE YEARNING SOUL

In the work we have to do, the transfusing power of a mighty love is absolutely essential. We quote the words of Knox, "Give me Scotland, or I die," and there is a sound in it that rather appeals to the heroic, but Scotland is a long way off and we read of the "Killing Time" with great complacency, for there is no risk of life or limb in the easy faith which we profess. It seems strange that it ever cost so much to win, and we say, "How changed things are. How much easier it is now to advance the kingdom of God." But in that we are mistaken. It is only when a man can say and mean it,—"Give me, or I die," that the yearning has irresistible power. Never until one realizes the value of a soul and the price at which it was purchased, and never until a love as intense and personal as that of a brother burns in our soul shall we be much used in the saving of the lost. The Bible pulses tumultuously with that yearning. Remember all

that Moses had given up for the slaves he had set free; recall how he had suffered at their hands for all his service and self-renunciation, and then listen to this prayer,—"Oh, this people have sinned a great sin and have made them gods of gold. Yet now, if thou wilt forgive their sin; and if not, blot me, I pray thee, out of thy book which thou hast written." Well may we be ashamed if we can see our people before their gods of gold and go on in snug complacency, drawing comfortable salaries and they rejoicing in the wages of unrighteousness. How perfectly the spirit of Moses was duplicated in the heart of Paul. Hear him say, "I caught myself wishing—praying—that I were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my kinsmen, according to the flesh." What a phrase that is, "I caught myself wishing. I discovered my ruling passion—the soul breaking into the processes of the mind." Whatever garment his mind was wearing, another thread comes into view. We often catch ourselves in the most solemn service, thinking of the worldly and the selfish, but here is a surprise of another sort. It was not a cool calculation, a deduction of logic after the examination of all the premises, it

was the cry of his real self, a heart note which smothered every other, and to which he had to listen. If we had the passion for Christ which he had we should soon be sharers of St. Paul's passion for men. What must be our feeling in the day when all things are revealed and we recall our stolid ease amid the crying of the wrecked and lost.

"The lost days of my life until to-day,
What were they, could I see them on the street
Lie as they fell? Would they be ears of wheat
Sown once for food, but trodden into clay?
Or golden coin squandered and still to pay?
Or drops of blood dabbling the guilty feet?
Or such spilt water as in dreams must cheat
The throats of men in hell who thirst alway?
I do not see them here, but after death
God knows I know the faces I shall see."

Paul knew the awfulness of sin, not simply in its punishment but especially in itself. He knew there was only one way to escape its awful death, and that was through Jesus Christ, the lover and Saviour of men. So when he saw his brethren turning away from their only hope, his mind was fairly bewildered by its agony, and he was fain to throw himself into the chasm if they thereby might pass by him to life. The *British Weekly* in a recent

editorial on this theme sounds a warning note: —

"We would not for a moment speak uncharitably, but the question often rises whether preachers have any purpose or any desire, or any dream of bringing souls to Christ by the sermons they preach. We have known men to sneer at the idea that the Church was a soul-saving organization. It is possible to belittle the great idea of salvation, but those who understand it in the New Testament sense will perceive that if the Church is not a soul-saving organization, it can never be the Church of Jesus Christ. Souls cannot be won without travail, without prayer, without expostulation, and pleading that come from the heart, without the power of the Holy Spirit. Only those who must have them will have them."

How the heart of the stern prophet melts, and there are tears in his voice as Hosea cries, —"O Ephraim, what shall I do with thee? How shall I give thee up?" There is infinite yearning in his soul as he says, "Come and let us return unto the Lord, for He hath torn and He will heal us; He hath smitten and He will bind us up." And Ezekiel, meditating upon lost Israel, dead long since in its sin, gives

voice to his yearning and prophesies to the valley of dry bones,—"O ye dry bones, hear the word of the Lord. I will put my spirit in you and ye shall live." It is Isaiah who cries, "For Zion's sake will I not hold my peace and for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest, until her righteousness go forth as brightness, and her salvation as a lamp that burneth." We need prophets to-day and we shall have the prophetic vision and the prophetic message when we have the prophetic yearning. What Absaloms there are in our Israel! We need as deep a yearning as David's and to a better purpose; and that, too, before it is too late:—

"From the ages that are past
The voice comes like a blast,
Over seas that wreck and drown,
Over tumult of traffic and town,
And from ages yet to be
Come the echoes back to me,
O Absalom, my son."

As I look into my own heart I marvel that I am not more moved by the awful devastation and the abundant remedy that is within my reach. But I am constantly praying that my own heart may be more deeply stirred and spiritually passionate.

"It is by the medicine of a living soul that dead souls are brought to life." It is the prophet, stretching himself upon the widow's child, with his face to the child's face and his heart to the child's heart, who brings the child to life. So there is nothing to warm a soul like another soul that is aglow.

We owe a great debt and it is long overdue. "I am debtor both to the Greeks and to the Barbarians," said Paul. What had he received of them? Absolutely nothing. But he had what they needed and must have, and he was their debtor until he had met that need. We have in our hand a pardon for a man condemned, and we are his debtor until we put it into his hand. It was for that purpose that we received it and with it went the message, Go quick everywhere! If we have superior faith, knowledge or power, we owe a debt to those who have less or none, and we cannot ease a burdened soul until we discharge our obligation.

In his little book, "The Passion for Souls," J. H. Jowett has a chapter on "The Disciples' Sacrifice," which is so clear and forceful that we are glad to quote from it at length. "Here then," he says, "is a principle, The gos-

pel of a broken heart demands the ministry of bleeding hearts. When our sympathy loses its pang, we can no longer be the servants of the passion. . . . I am amazed how easily I become callous. I am ashamed how small and unsensitive is the surface I present to the needs and sorrows of the world. 'Why do you wish to return?' I asked a noble young missionary who had been invalided home. 'Because I can't sleep for thinking of them.' But my brother, except when I spend a day with my Lord, the trend of my life is quite another way, I cannot think about them because I am so inclined to sleep! A benumbment settles down upon my spirit and the pangs of the world awake no corresponding sympathy. We can never heal the needs we do not feel. Tearless hearts can never be the heralds of the Passion. We must pity if we would redeem. We must bleed if we would be the ministers of the saving blood."

There come to us from missionary fields such expressions of self-denying devotion as shame us in our ease. But the work in mission fields is the same that is ours at home. It is the evangel. If missions have succeeded better than the home work, it has been simply be-

cause of the supreme devotion which has been put into it. When Henry Martin reached India, he made this record in his journal: "I desire to burn out for my God." James Hannington could not be crushed by mountains of opposition, but cried, "I refuse to be disappointed. I will only praise." At the end of long years of toil, James Chalmers said, "Recall the twenty-one years, give me back all its experiences; give me its shipwrecks, give me its standings in the face of death, give it me surrounded with savages with spears and clubs, give it me back again with spears flying about me, with the clubs knocking me to the ground,—give it me back, and I will still be your missionary." So those holy men failed not in the mighty yearning of their soul, but with an ardour for men which never failed they came to their coronation and brought with them gems for their crown.

But there is One who is our example and inspiration beyond all prophets, apostles and martyrs. To Him let us turn. When His disciples saw Him in the temple, there was one passage out of the prophets which sprang to every lip, "THE ZEAL OF THY HOUSE HATH EATEN ME UP." The Master's eyes were

flashing, all sense of fear and shame had melted as the mist melts in the fierce sun. The desecration and desolation of the Father's House set every nerve athrill. That was the beginning of His Messianic ministry, and He kept up that pace until His all-consuming zeal brought Him to the cross. He had no heart in anything but His mission. His meat and drink were to do God's will. His disciples understood His power and could never shake off the impelling force of His zeal. The last words that He spoke were hot with haste. They felt that He demanded every day of them what they had seen every day in Him, and to that high devotion they yielded themselves until they overcame every opposition of the pagan world and overthrew their temples and their gods. His life was a life of yearning and it could be compressed into a single sentence, "He had a passion for saving the lost." There is a depth of meaning in the words of Thomas Goodwin: "God had only one son, and He made Him a minister." How gloriously did He fulfill that ministry until He had watered every ledge by sea and mountain with His tears, moistened the olive leaves of Gethsemane with the sweat of His soul and

stained His own brow with the blood of His passion and broke His heart upon a cross of shame. He came not to be ministered unto but to minister and to give His life. He was a man of infinite pity and of tears. If any man is ashamed to weep over the people, he is not like his Master. He bore the marks of His anxieties. Once the Jews made a guess at His age. They put Him near fifty. As a matter of fact He was near thirty. What He announced at the beginning of His life as His program He kept up to the end. He went about His Father's business and He was sore straitened until His baptism of service should be accomplished. It is said that Democritus never came out of doors that he did not incontinently burst into laughter, so foolish did men appear to him. But Jesus saw men in sin and misery and want and pain, and yearned so to help them that He sobbed in anguish,—"How oft would I have gathered thee—but ye would not."

Here, then, is our supreme example of the yearning soul, and we are called like Paul to "fill up that which is behind of the suffering of Christ." His work is accomplished, but that story needs a teller,—that gospel needs an

evangelist and the call is to us. Our heart must know something of His agony. Paul was so anxious over those committed to his care that he used a figure of speech that is incomparable,—"My little children, of whom I travail in birth again till Christ be formed in you," and so he followed in His footsteps of whom it was prophesied, "He shall see of the travail of His soul, and shall be satisfied."

Brethren, if we are sometimes tired and spent in the agony of our yearning, let us remember that it is the price which hath been paid by the holy prophets and by the Son of God, and when the soul so travails it shall bring forth a new life, both for itself and for the Church of God.

VI

PERSONAL EVANGELISM

We are now come to the very citadel of soul-winning. Here is the entrance into the full reward of evangelistic effort. Looking over many years of splendid opportunity with the privilege of addressing thousands of people every Sunday, I find that I have won more to decide for Christ in their homes and offices than at the altars of the church, and in this hand to hand work there have come to my own soul the sweetest rewards of my ministry. I have to confess that I came to this work with great trepidation of spirit. It required a greater struggle for me to undertake it than any other part of my pastoral duties. I have many a time walked around a whole city block before I could get courage to ring a door-bell and make my errand known. But an errand persevered in under such circumstances was generally successful.

This method is the effective answer to the plea that the unconverted will not come to revival meetings. Among those who have

come to Christ through personal appeal I have found many of superior parts, persons of fine sensibilities and deeply conscientious. After passing many revival seasons they became averse to putting themselves where they would be uncomfortable and possibly singled out by various tests which evangelists are wont to apply. It is highly probable that they would have continued to avoid such meetings and have come to the end of life unsaved. Indeed, I have found many persons who have passed through the faithful pastorate of men of God and have said that nothing but personal and private effort would have prevailed upon them to make public confession of their allegiance to Christ. I have found this straightforward method of appeal most effective with men. It is better in most cases to be absolutely frank as to one's purpose. There may be some cases where a letter will do good, or where the matter of beginning a Christian life can be brought in incidentally, but I much prefer the open, manly method. It was a favourite plan of Dr. J. O. Peck to get a man to enlarge upon his business and explain its method and details, and then to say to him, "You can teach me in these things, but there is one thing in

which I can instruct you. I have listened to you while you explained your business. Now I want you to listen to me while I tell you of the way in which you can be saved. Will you let me teach you?"

In one of my pastorates was a man with a large and interesting family. The wife and children were members of the Church and he was not. He had come to the city as a young man, absolutely penniless. From a humble position as clerk in a furniture store he advanced by energy and thrift until he was able to start a little business of his own. His wife worked with him, and at night he delivered with a wheelbarrow the goods he had sold during the day. His advance in business was rapid, and when I knew him he had a large building five stories high packed with furniture, on which he did not owe a dollar. He delighted to tell me of his early struggles, and asked me to come and look over his plant. I took the invitation as a call from God and went. From the basement we went up, story after story, to the top of the building, he, telling me in substance as we reached each landing,—"Is not this great Babylon which I have builded," and I wondering when it would be

best for me to give the prophet's message. At last we reached the top floor. It was crowded with refrigerators, but my heart was hot. "You say this is all yours. You do not owe a dollar. Once you were poor. You have had splendid health while your nearest competitor sickened and died. His wife was insane, while yours has helped you at every turn. You say your competitor was your superior in training and experience, but things were against him. So it seems that the greatest factor in this success has been, not yourself, but God. He gave you health and a good wife and fortunate surroundings. What have you ever done to show your gratitude? You do not even ask a blessing at the loaded table in your elegant home,—much less call your children about you for family prayers. So far as they would know, you absolutely disown Him who has crowned your life with success. Is such a course manly or honest? And if not, about how long do you plan to keep it up?" There was silence in the refrigerator loft, and the strong man was moved. Then I said tenderly, "I am persuaded better things of you. We are here alone. Isn't it a good time to settle this great question?" He

looked me full in the eye for a moment, then reaching over a low refrigerator that stood between us he took my hand in a vise-like grip and said, "I never saw it that way before. If God will forgive me, I will own Him before the world and serve Him as long as I live." I came around to his side of the refrigerator and we knelt on the bare floor and prayed together. The ice was all melted, and there were scalding tears on his cheeks. He kept his word, and that day is a good day for me to recall when the fire burns low.

Another incident of personal work I wish to relate because of the wide spiritual effect which came from it, and because of a solemn promise which I have not failed to keep unto this day. In this I shall give the names and place, for that is a part of my promise.

One Monday, during my seven years' pastorate at Hanson Place, Brooklyn, a young man came to the parsonage somewhat under the influence of liquor. He seemed to be anxious to do better. He asked an opportunity to sign the pledge, and just as I was about to pray with him, the door-bell rang. As I opened the door a fine appearing young man stood on the step and asked if he could have a

moment's private conversation with me. We went to the back parlor and he said,—"I was at your service last night, and if I understood you correctly, you said in substance that the example of a man of upright life who did not acknowledge Christ might in some ways do more harm to young men than a drunkard in the gutter. I wish to know if you meant that, for I slept little last night on account of what you said. I mean to be upright, and I have never acknowledged Christ." I then explained to him that a man who depended upon his morality was really saying to every young man that Christ was not a necessity in any successful and well-ordered life, and so might turn many away from the Christian life. What I said seemed to impress him, and he told me his story. He said he was the secretary of the Sunday-school in Cuyler Chapel, and he could not bear to think that in such a position he could be doing harm by his example. He said, "What need I yet, and is there any reality to this 'experiencing religion' of which I hear you speak?" I said to him, as I have said to others before him,—"There is a reality, and I am so convinced of it that I will give up the ministry if you do not your-

self experience it, provided you will meet the conditions." I then called the man in the other room and after introducing them I said, —"You are both here on the same errand, though you have come by very different paths. Wide apart as you are socially, it is the same experience which you both need, and it must come to each of you by full surrender to God." I asked them to kneel with me in prayer. I prayed earnestly for each of them by name, and was greatly moved as I prayed. The profligate followed with a publican's prayer, and as he prayed the fashion of his countenance was changed. He felt that he was pardoned for the past, and before he finished praying he began to praise God. It was different with Andrew Herlin, the gentlemanly bank clerk. I do not think he quite liked it to kneel there with the profligate and seek for mercy on the same terms. There was something of the Pharisee's spirit which he struggled hard to keep out of sight. He grew a little humbler as he proceeded, and seemed almost frightened at the sound of his own voice in prayer. When he finished, I offered a short prayer and we arose. The first man was radiant, but Herlin was evidently in great

perturbation of spirit. "Any light?" I asked. "I hardly know. I do not feel like this man, but there is something strange about it. I must know more." I made the way of faith as plain as I could and we separated after he promised to come to the parsonage after bank hours the next day. He kept his promise. I saw evidences that the fog was lifting, but he was not yet at peace. We prayed together as he stood at the door. He pressed my hand and smiled, but said nothing. There were two similar interviews before the full assurance came. He had said, "I can be satisfied with nothing but absolute assurance," and at last he had what Thomas found. It multiplied my own faith to see him. There was little of the emotional about him, but his feet had touched the Rock.

For two weeks I did not see him. One day a messenger came hurrying to me and said that Herlin had passed away. He was taken with a sudden hemorrhage and after a few days' sickness was dead. He said the father had a message for me, and this was his message. "Tell Dr. Goodell," said the dying man, "that I was never able to go to the Chapel and tell the young people how I found Jesus and ask

them to forgive me for being a stumbling block in their way so long. I want to be buried from the Chapel, and I want him to stand by me and say for me what I would have said if I had been permitted. And I wish you would ask him for the sake of other young men who are morally good but do not know Christ, to please tell my story each year at his revival meetings." I may add that this last request has been religiously kept to this day.

When the day of the funeral was come, I went to the service from another meeting and was a little late. The Chapel was crowded to the street. It was only after I was recognized that I was able to press my way through the crowd and reach the casket. Never in my life had I stood quite so literally between the living and the dead. And never had I been more overwhelmed with the message that I bore. I found that Herlin was universally respected and beloved. He had been a leader by virtue of his ability and spotless character. I told the simple story of his conversion to the hundreds of young people who had loved him, and delivered to them his thrilling message. The great company, the banks of flowers, the

white face among them, and the deeply personal message all combined to make the hour one of the most impressive of a lifetime. But one thing could happen. A revival began at once among the young people and went on until the great majority of them had yielded themselves to Christ. Though years have passed, the pastor recently told me that the influence of Herlin's testimony was still felt throughout the community. It is not too much to say that this bit of personal effort has been blessed of God in the salvation of hundreds of young men, and I put it here in permanent form in the hope that it may still be blessed in its message to such young men as Jesus loved, and as an encouragement to personal, every-day evangelism.

Every earnest worker in the personal method has scores of such cases as I have presented as seals to his ministry. Dr. Cuyler said of the three thousand souls builded unto his church, "I have handled every stone." It may seem like wasting time for a man of large concern to spend a whole evening with one soul, but believe me, there is nothing that is more according to the method of Jesus, and nothing that pays so well. I knew a pastor who gave

up a paid engagement in order that he might visit and help a family where he found a wife and child trembling in the corner and a husband on his back upon the floor, amusing himself by throwing the sofa in the air. The result of that visit was the salvation of the man. In less than a year he who had been kept from starving by the charity of the Church was in receipt of a salary of $1,800, and had a pleasant home and happy wife and children. Is there anything that pays better earthly dividends? If a millionaire had invited thee to his home, wouldst thou not have gone? How much rather carry the bread of life to a starving soul?

We speak of the pulpit power of Spurgeon, but few men realize that his success was after all the success of personal effort. For forty years in London he averaged one convert a day,—an almost unparalleled record of steadfast devotion. Bishop McDowell tells of a young minister who went home from his conference to put into practice the personal method. He reached the charge on Tuesday. Wednesday he went down street and into a bank. The president was not a Christian, though his wife was. The pastor had told

them that he did not expect to return. The president reminded him of it when he came in. Then all at once it came over this young pastor that if he would win a hundred souls this must probably be one of them. Why not begin at once? He turned to the president of the bank and said,—"I did not want to come back, but I must have come for some good purpose. Possibly I have come back on your account." There was something in his tone that had not been in it before. To his surprise the president changed tone and replied with manifest feeling: "May be you have." Inside of five minutes they were on their knees together in that office, and a man was won to Christ. Before Christmas that young pastor had won seventy-eight of the hundred for whom he began at Conference to pray.

At the close of an address upon Evangelism I was asked by a clergyman,—"If this matter of which you speak is so important, why is it that Robertson of Brighton and Phillips Brooks, the two men who have most stamped themselves upon the religious life of two continents, had none of it?" I was pleased to quote to him the words of Robertson's best biographer that the secret of his power was in

the warm, emotional piety which he found among the evangelicals of his early life, and the force of which sent him out to be a practical, personal worker among the poor of Brighton. He himself said,—"It is visitation of the poor which more than anything else brings a man into contact with the actual and the real, and destroys fanciful dreams." His biographers say of him: "The rough and poor people of the parish among whom he laboured faithfully made themselves over to him at once." Robertson was a great letter writer. And what letters they were! So full of sympathy, so delicate and tender, turning the attention of the cross-bearing and the bereft to Christ "who feels now what we feel and can impart to us the blessedness of His sympathy."

No man who knew Phillips Brooks would deny him a place among those who were the bearers of the personal evangel. I was a pastor near him for eight years and am unspeakably his debtor for his personal attention. To my personal knowledge scores of unconverted men and scores of students, wrestling with the great problems of the Christian life, found their way to his study and came out content.

When his friends remonstrated with him over the sacrifice of his time to such callers, his answer was: "The man who wishes to see me is the man I wish to see."

VII

LAYMEN IN EVANGELISM

It will be well for the Church when it comes really to appreciate the fact that there are not two kinds of religion, one for the pulpit and one for the pew, but that the same principle of service and self-denial relates alike to preachers, lay or clerical. At a meeting of the Episcopal Club of Boston, Dean Hodges of the Cambridge Divinity School, spoke in the following striking terms of the leadership of laymen in historic religious awakenings: "There have been three notable periods in the history of the extension of the Christian religion—the time of the martyrs, the time of the monks and the time of the Methodists. In each of these periods, religion spread phenomenally. The significance of each of these for our present purpose is that each of them was an era of lay activity. The Christian Church was begun by laymen; the apostles were all laymen. It has ever since owed its best growth to the coöperation of laymen. The monks were lay orders. The Methodists

won their great victories by lay preaching. Not only that, but these laymen in every one of these three periods did their work in spite of the clergy, discouraged by the clergy, detested by the clergy." We are glad to believe that this arraignment of the clergy is no longer true, but that on the other hand our pastors are impressed by the fact that if any great work is accomplished towards the uplift of the community, laymen must give themselves to it. There are not far from a hundred thousand pastors in our country in active service, but there are more than a hundred times as many members whose solemn pledge and gracious opportunity demand that they shall make full proof of their devotion. Pastors come and go, but the membership as a body stays on. They give direction to the work of the Church. Nay more, they are responsible for the work of the pulpit, for a preacher cannot long do a work in which his people have no heart, and to which they refuse to give their toil. Why should a pastor try to pull the load of a sleeping and unresponsive Church when his call is to reach the world by the coöperation of his own people? When the elder Beecher was pastor at Park Street, Bos-

ton, some one asked him the secret of his success, and his answer was: "I preach on Sunday, but I have four hundred and fifty members who take up my message on Monday and preach it wherever they go." The ideal plan for the extending of God's kingdom is not through one evangelist or even through one pastor,—it is by the united effort of the membership associated with a consecrated pastor. An aroused Church membership will give us a redeemed continent. It is the common soldier who fights the world's battles, and victory or defeat turns upon the man behind the gun.

If our laymen are to win, they must put themselves in touch with the principles of personal service. The world must be won man by man. The personal touch is always the touch of power. Come nearer, come nearer to the needy heart if thou wouldst bless and heal! You recall the complaint of the Roman soldier as he took his broadsword to enter his first contest: "The sword is too short." "If you add a step to it," said the Roman mother, "it will be long enough," and history records that as Rome shortened her sword she extended her kingdom.

The layman knows that the personal touch

is the secret of business success. It is the age of the agent and the promoter and the commercial traveller. Seventy per cent. of all the trade of our time is accomplished by personal solicitors who circumnavigate the globe and crowd every hotel and train to do their work. Bishop Fowler tells of an alert preacher who, when he was sent to a town where commercial travellers congregated, went among them and asked each one for what commercial house he was running. At last, some one impressed by his business manner, asked: "For whom are you running?" And the pastor replied with great eagerness, "I am running for the Lord Jesus Christ and I am going to show my goods at half-past ten to-morrow morning up at that house with a steeple, and I wish you would come and examine the goods." It is needless to say that the church was full, and so were the contribution box and the altar.

If we wish to recruit an organization or a fraternity, it is the personal method we adopt. College students spend weeks and months in cultivating those whose presence will add weight to the society they represent. They introduce them to their friends and concern themselves with all their interests in school

and town. Alas, that it should be true of us who profess to keep company with Jesus as our dearest friend, that we have walked the streets of our city for years with neighbours of our street and block, and have never once offered to introduce them to our dearest Friend!

A recent editorial in the *Sunday School Times* will emphasize and illustrate the success which attends the effort of reaching for the individual: "It takes a really big soul to be interested in an individual; anybody can be interested in a multitude. One secret of President Roosevelt's real power and greatness was shown in an incident of his address at the dedicatory exercises of the new capitol of the State of Pennsylvania. There was an old graybeard about ten rows back who wore on the lapel of his faded blue suit the little bronze button of the Grand Army of the Republic. The president had been speaking of the steadfastness of Pennsylvania at historical crises, and mentioned the time when the preservation of the Union was the issue. 'The time,' he suddenly exclaimed, 'when you, my friend, down there with the button—you and your comrades, saved the Union.' The veteran's face beamed with joy. Tears of pride

stood in his gray eyes. He grabbed off his wide felt hat and raised it aloft. Because of his ability to be interested in one man, the president had tenfolded his power, not only with the tens of thousands then present, but with his nation and with the whole world. And the best thing about this one-man interest is that it is not confined to presidents; we can all practise it ourselves."

The results which have come from this personal work on the part of laymen are simply marvellous. A layman who had become worldly through the increase of property was one day waited upon by his pastor and told that he felt moved after prayer to lay upon his heart the bringing of one of his rich friends to Christ. This he refused at first to do, but after repeated urging consented to invite the friend to dine with him. Just as they were leaving the table, he told his message with much self-abasement. His friend replied: "I have wished for a year that some one would help me to Christ." So enamoured of his plan did the worker become that he continued his personal efforts until one hundred and fifty men had been won to the Christian life. In Philadelphia is a layman who had

long been a member of the Church, but had been powerless for good. In a revival service his heart was warmed and he felt called to begin the work of winning men one by one. In four and one half months he had led one hundred and ninety-four to a better life.

VIII

A PERSONAL CHAPTER

THERE is probably nothing which interests us so much as, and possibly nothing that helps us more than, the simple story of the struggles and triumphs of men in their own personal experience. I shall waive my feelings and write a chapter of my own life history with the hope that I may help some one who passes the same way that I have travelled. I write in sincere humility, arrogating to myself no knowledge or devotion superior to that of my brethren. Such personal incidents or statistics as may be given are presented solely that God's name may be glorified; for all the power and all the victory are His. Before I tell you my own experience it will be wise to tell you how I came to have one.

I was born in Puritan New England. My father and mother were Methodists. I was brought up with this idea of the ministry: that a man must have a call, a call of God, strange and powerful. I also learned from them that the measure of a man's success in

the ministry was his power to reach and win men to God; that was the only standard of success. When I was looking towards the ministry, I did not have the call in the solemn, tremendous form: "Woe is me if I preach not the gospel." I went very tremblingly to my first charge and was not sure that I was in the ministry for a life work. There seemed to be indications that led that way, but I was not satisfied. I said, "Oh, Lord, if this is my work, give me souls for my hire. If souls are saved, I shall take that as evidence that God wants me." I wanted to know whether I had the power to reach the hearts of men, or whether I simply had their intellectual approval. And God was pleased to give us some souls as the result of our labour for the first year. I said, "This may have happened so, but if God will send us a more marvellous manifestation next year, then I shall be certain that I have a call from heaven." And God was pleased to send us a greater blessing the second year. But like Gideon, I wanted yet another test. I was to change to an appointment in the city, and I said, "If God shall bless me there, I shall take it beyond all question that He wants me in the ministry."

The Holy Spirit gave us yet a larger manifestation of His favour and many came into the kingdom. Then it dawned upon me that what I had been asking for three years was, after all, the thing I was to expect every year in the ministry. I went into the ministry and have prosecuted it with that end in view, with an absolute conviction on my soul that I was doing the thing I ought to do and that the Almighty would be my sufficient helper. I say to His glory that in these twenty-five years of my ministry I have never received less than one hundred souls a year and in some years many times that number; and in all those twenty-five years I have not passed a single monthly communion service without receiving some into the church.

When I came to New York I feared it would open a new chapter in my experience. I had been before that in Brooklyn for seven years at the Hanson Place Church. That had been for years our largest Methodist Church, and had a wonderful revival history. When I went there I supposed there would be a revival,—that was the expected thing. But when I went to Calvary in New York some of my friends said,—"Now there will be an

end of the sort of thing you have been expecting all these years. There will doubtless be some spiritual movement but you will face difficult and harder conditions. You will find that New York and Brooklyn are two different places." And a pulpiteer, since become a novelist, had written,—"New York is the graveyard of ministers." In October we had a ministers' meeting at Calvary Church. I was asked to give an address on the subject of "Pastoral Evangelism." As I walked up the aisle to speak, one of the brethren whispered to me, "It is a new field over here. I wonder how it will be at the end of this season. Perhaps you will not hold revival meetings such as you have been holding, but will undertake some new method of doing your work which will not count so much on getting men converted." I said what I had to say about evangelistic work, but my brother's words kept ringing in my ears—and I felt forced to add at the close of my address, "I am under new conditions. What will happen here I do not know. But this is true. God is the same in New York as in every other city in the world. I don't know *what* will happen, but I wish to say this; you can keep your eyes on

Calvary Church, for *something* is going to happen. It will be a victory for God or the devil. The thing will not be done in a corner. All the community will know whether it goes well or ill with us." And then I said something that will seem to you too strong. "But before there shall be a failure of God's work in Calvary Church there will be a funeral in Calvary's parsonage, for I simply cannot live to witness the defeat of the armies of the living God. Before God, I will die in the streets before there shall be a failure of that great work in New York City." If the people would not come to church and if they would not heed my message from the pulpit, I meant to toil in the streets of the city until there was no more strength in me. I intended to meet people in their homes and offices and bring them if possible to the personal choice of Jesus Christ as their Saviour. I went into it with the determination to win or die and before God, I would have kept my word. Morning, noon and night I was at it. My prayers and my efforts went together, and I walked the streets of New York every hour in the afternoon until it seemed to me that if all the stairs I had climbed had been put on top

of one another I would have been a long way towards the moon. I did not sleep much at night, for the anxiety that was on my soul. When I reflected upon the matter I recalled the fact that most of the men who have moved the world for God were not good sleepers. Jesus was one of that number. The night knew Him well, the mountain fastnesses and the sobbing sea, and the sweat of His brow was stained by the travail of His soul. If "love of power consumed Cæsar and love of pleasure consumed Mark Antony," why should it be a thing incredible that love of souls should consume God's ministers?

I did not sleep well, but on the first Sunday in February I received my pay for all the sleep I had lost, for that day I received three hundred and sixty four souls into the Church of the living God. I do not know how many of them were converted—I do not even know how many of us are converted. But they bore the evidence of the Spirit in their lives and most of them have kept steadily on. The work was duplicated this present year. And this last winter I received as many as a year ago. As the result of a two years' pastorate in that city, which is the "graveyard of min-

isters," God gave us over and above all removals, one thousand additions, increasing the membership from a little over fourteen hundred to more than twenty-four hundred.

Throughout all these years of ministerial service we have invariably adopted the course here indicated. We have served up-town churches and down-town churches, family churches and churches of the people, but in every case the principle applied has been successful. The matter of numbers will of necessity depend in part on local conditions, but we believe the principle is of universal application and will be truly successful in every case. We should not hesitate to adopt it in wealthy congregations and among people of social prestige, as well as in churches made up of the so-called common people. We have never found the cultivated to be opposed to spiritual life as represented in the throbbing soul of an earnest pastor, and we have yet to find an officiary that would not rally to the work when laid upon them in the spirit of the Master.

IX

THE PREPARATION OF PRAYER

BEFORE one undertakes actual evangelistic work there must be thorough preparation. The first preparation is that wrought by prayer.

It is of the utmost importance for Christian people to have clear ideas concerning prayer, that they may neither minimize its power nor charge God foolishly. The most of the men who have moved this world towards God were men of prayer. If we turn to the Word of God, there stands Abraham interceding for the worldly Lot and Jacob wrestling with the Angel till the break of day. There is Moses praying for his people and Elijah opening and shutting the gates of heaven by the leverage of prayer. The Psalms themselves are little more than communion and petition with accompanying ascriptions of praise for answered prayer. Here is the Master Himself, the greatest of all examples, spending whole nights in wilderness and mountain, transformed

by prayer, that He may be transfigured through faith. As Dr. Watson says, "One remembers in modern times the multitude of believing men who have wrought marvels by prayer; how the more Martin Luther had to do, the more he prayed; how Cromwell on his deathbed interceded for God's cause and God's people in the finest prayer ever offered by a patriot; how it is written of the 'Saints of the Covenant' in Scotland that they lived 'praying and preaching' and that they died 'praying and fighting.' What possessed those men that they undertook no work till they had first met with God, that they turned unto Him in every hour of defeat, that they carried to His feet the trophies of their victories?" The Christian poet says,—

"Prayer is the Christian's vital breath,
The Christian's native air,
His watchword at the gates of Death.
He enters Heaven by prayer."

The poet of Nature adds,—

"More things are wrought by prayer than this world dreams of.
Therefore let thy voice
Rise like a fountain for me night and day.
For what are men better than sheep or goats
That nourish a blind life within the brain,

If, knowing God, they lift not hands of prayer,
Both for themselves and those who call them friends?
For so the whole round world is every way
Bound by gold chains about the feet of God."

The Christian philosopher has said, "Prayer is religion in act," but it is strange what misconceptions are held as to what prayer really is. It is a great day in any man's life when he learns that lesson and finds out how to pray. I had been nine years in the ministry before I understood that secret. To learn it I had to pass through agonies, compared with which crucifixion is but in the kindergarten of suffering. But the holy peace and assurance that came to me were worth all they cost. At the risk of being misunderstood, I must say that prayer is a condition of heart before it forms itself into a petition upon our lips. First of all, prayer is communion and adoration. Petition is rather the secondary than the primary object of prayer. In it we come not so much to tell God what we want of Him as to ask Him what He wants of us. We have often come to God, selfish, angry and rebellious, but in that chamber a solemn hush falls upon our spirit, a soft hand is laid upon our throbbing hearts and we seem to hear God

say, "Softly, my child." Many of us in truth must say,—

"I was not ever thus, nor prayed that Thou shouldst lead me on,
I loved to choose and see my path, but now lead Thou me on."

How ashamed we become as we think of some of our prayers. Willful and disappointed, we have prayed like other foolish prophets,—"Let me die."

"Two hands upon the breast, and labour done.
Two pale feet crossed in rest. The race is won.
So pray we oftentimes, mourning our lot.
God in His kindness answereth not.
Two hands to work addressed, aye for His praise.
Two feet that never rest, walking His ways.
So pray we afterwards, low on our knees,
Pardon those erring prayers. Father, hear these."

"Just so far as we listen to the voice and language that God speaks, we shall learn to speak in the voice and language that God hears." I do not mean to say that prayer may not be a straightforward and unhesitating petition, and least of all would I desire to minify the value of intercessory prayer. I can think of nothing so blessed as to pray and feel that the heavens are open, and that however careless men may be, there is quenchless interest

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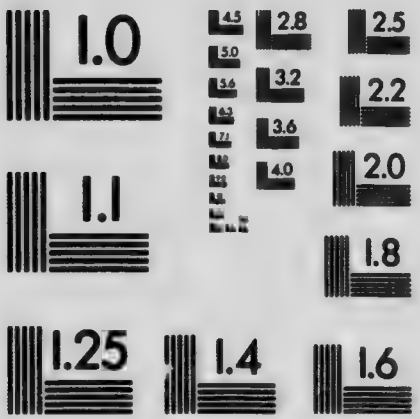

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in heaven in our behalf. The great purpose in prayer is that we may change eyes with God, that we may lay down our plans at His feet, and receive instead His perfect will. Jesus Himself becomes our example in the garden of Gethsemane. Under the spell of prayer the cry "Let this cup pass" changes to, "Thy will be done."

"Into the woods my Master went, clean forspent, forspent;
Into the woods my Master came, forspent with love and shame.
Out of the woods my Master went, and He was well content;
Out of the woods my Master came, content with death and shame."

What is the agony of Gethsemane if a man can get out of it a victory like that? Many of us are not insistent in our prayers. We pray and run away. We do not wait to see if God is not handing down some great gift for us. Manton, the old Puritan preacher, quaintly says, "Foolish boys that knock at a door in wantonness will not stay till somebody cometh to open to them, but a man that hath business will knock and knock again until his call is answered." When we use our telephones, we are not content until we hear the

voice of the one we seek. There are many who undertake to talk with God, but they hang up the receiver before the answer comes. Wait until there is an answer from the responsive heavens; wait until there is borne in upon your soul the fact of God's abiding love and care for you. Then you can rise from your knees and go forty days if necessary in the strength of that revelation of the heart of God.

The value of prayer in evangelistic work would be hard to overestimate. Nothing is so productive of that indefinable power which is felt better than described, but which gives unspeakable unction to the proclamation of the truth. But we are persuaded that many utterly misapprehend the part which prayer is to play in the prosecution of revival work. They seem to think that one has only to retire to his study and spend his time in supplication before God and that in answer to that supplication a strange spirit will pervade the community, hardened men will grow tender and those who have never gone to the house of the Lord will be constrained to turn their faces hither. We would not for a moment deny that miracles of grace are wrought through

prayer, but we are persuaded out of our experience that prayer will be unavailing unless we go out ourselves to answer, at least in part, our own petitions. Our experience has been that God does not send a revival in one's sleep. We are likely to hear His word saying, "Go ye," but we will have tarried so long in His presence that the glow which Moses had in his heart and which mounted to his face will appear also in us, and some may say of us, as another said of John,

"Thou hast parted with thine eyes in prayer,
Unearthly are they both, and so thy lips
Seem like the porches of the Spirit land,
For thou hast laid rare treasure by,
Unlocked by Him in nature, and thine eye
Glows with a vision and Apocalypse,
Thine own sweet soul can hardly understand."

X

EVANGELISTIC BIBLE STUDY

NEXT to prayer I put the devotional study of the Word of God as the greatest preparation for the work we have to do. Notice, I have said "devotional study." The critical study of the Bible is necessary, and while much of that must of necessity be left to those who have had special preparation which supplements the critical faculty, it is true that every man who is to handle the Word of God must know something about its critical interpretation. By such study we strengthen ourselves for our work, and gain a stronger intellectual grip upon the fundamentals of the Book. But there comes a time in a man's life when he does not look over the letter of his wife or his friend to see whether the sentences are properly balanced, or whether there is an error in spelling or punctuation—we yearn for the message which the letter holds. There comes a time when one's Bible is God's love letter to him, and he reads it for the message which shall strengthen his soul and comfort

him in the midst of his burdens. There is also great need in this connection that we read the Word with special reference to the thing we have in hand—the winning of men to God. It will do us good if we can get something of the yearning spirit which animated the prophets and the apostles. In the last month before my special revival work, I try to have all my reading of the kind that will inspire me. A runner if he is going to run a great race from Athens to Marathon must lay aside every weight and do every last thing that he can to get himself in trim for the contest. It is no ordinary struggle that we have before us. The tug of it may crack our sinews, and almost break our hearts, but the rewards are incalculably great.

I turn first to the Old Testament to get its evangelistic message. I confess a special love for Joshua, and I try to catch a little of the old man's spirit. I would go a long way to get hold of Joshua's hand, the hand which held a sword that never felt its scabbard for thirty years, and never fell before the stroke of any man. It was to him that Jehovah said: "There shall not any man be able to stand before thee all the days

of thy life; be strong and of good courage." Joshua, as he laid down the burden of his life and fell on sleep, was able to say, "Not one of all God's promises to me has failed." Faith in God comes easy in sight of the man who reined in the steeds of the sun and put a silver bridle on the moon in the valley of Ajalon. I know what the higher critics have to say about this passage, but the Book says, "There never was a day like it before or since when God hearkened unto the voice of a man," and I am quite willing to leave it with that scriptural comment. And then I read about Caleb, faithful he among the faithless spies. It challenges my soul to read about the old man's courage. Forty years after he made his little excursion after the grapes of Eshcol he reminded his friend Joshua, and the children of Israel, that the Anakim he had seen could well be defeated by any man who had God with him. The man who once was young is now old, but he asks as a special favour that he may have a chance to face the men that terrified the unfaithful spies and says that if they will only give him that part of the territory, he will conquer it himself. Perhaps he boasts a little, and perhaps then as now men are loath to feel

that they are not as strong as they used to be. At any rate he asks that the matter may be put to the test, and down he goes and fights the battle as he said he would and wins the victory as he said he could. It makes a man feel for the buckle of his belt to read of Caleb.

And then I pass on to the Psalms, and try to catch the spirit of the man who wrote them. And now the prophets wander by. There is but one burden upon their hearts. It is a burden for lost Israel. They long with an unspeakable longing to reach those who are going astray, jeopardizing their own life, and the life of the nation. One of our English preachers has lately said that whether there be two Isaiahs or not he is glad there is only one Jeremiah. I suppose he means by that that one weeping prophet and one set of jeremiads is enough, but I cannot help feeling that it would be well for us as a people if there were more prophets to weep between the porch and the altar and to cry with the agony of a great longing, "Oh, that my head were waters, and mine eyes a fountain of tears, that I might weep day and night for the slain of the daughter of my people." And now we turn to Jonah, and listen to the weird evangelist

in the streets of Nineveh. It was once quite the fashion to sneer at Jonah, and the mere mention of his name would provoke a smile, but that day has passed. Once men seemed to think that the message of the book of Jonah centred upon the size of a whale's throat, and the time it would take a fish's stomach to make chyme and chyle of a prophet. But men are wiser now. They see that the message of the book of Jonah is as fresh as your own last conviction of sin, and this is its message: If any man or any people try to run away from God they will get into trouble; and on the other hand, if any man or any nation will humble themselves and forsake their sins, God will have mercy and pardon.

Now we are ready for the New Testament, and there we find the fourfold record of Him whose zeal consumed His life. If we were to write in a single sentence the story of the life of Jesus, I think this would be the substance of that sentence, "He went about saving the lost." So I read the chapter that Luke gives us about the lost coin, and the lost sheep, and the lost boy. I see Him ceaselessly seeking the sick, and the poor, and the lost,—a guest of publicans and sinners that He may

show them a new life, and win them to it. I mark him praying at dead of night in mountain fastnesses, and by the sobbing sea, and I watch Him on the way to Gethsemane and up to Calvary. I shall never cease to be grateful to God that I had the opportunity to trace His footsteps in the Holy Land. I shall never forget the day when at nine o'clock in the morning I went out to the skull-shaped hill where Jesus died and saw the very rocks, which for all you or I know were rent asunder in the throes which shook the world at the hour of His crucifixion. As I looked at them I said: "These are rock, but they broke in that awful hour; can human hearts be harder than they?" I have never quite lost the inspiration that came to me from the six hours of meditation on the crest of Golgotha. It is not far to Joseph's new-made grave, but the door of it is open, and we hasten to the mount of Ascension. I catch the triumphant note, "All power is given unto Me, Lo, I am with you alway." Then I read about Pentecost and marvel at the uplift of the apostles on that great day. I remind myself of the fact that every man must have his own Pentecost, and that only he who has felt the tongue of fire is

able to speak the words that burn. And then I read of those wonderful things which happened after Pentecost, and note that every page of the blessed Book is bound to every other page by a crimson thread.

XI

EVANGELISTIC PREACHING

ALL preaching that is really to count must be in some sense evangelistic preaching, and every man who is religiously to bless the world must be at heart an evangelist. It will, therefore, be seen that no man with a special and limited function has any right to monopolize the name—evangelist. In the New Testament sense the evangel is the good news that the whole Book promulgates. First a Messiah, a world deliverer, foretold and expected, unto whom all the prophets testify: The Son of God become the Son of man, "who shall not fail nor be discouraged till He have set judgment in the earth; and the isles shall wait for His law," of whose kingdom and glory there shall be no end. We have not sufficiently exalted the King and His kingdom. We have not believed strongly enough in His present and ultimate triumph. There is evil in our high places. Our whole community has been shocked at the revelations of the selfishness of the selfish and the evil practices which are

corrupting the good. How will it all end? If we have any doubt let us get back with the fearful whom Gideon could not use. We have no place in the ranks, for we shall fight the fight of the half-hearted and fill the place of a better man. If you preach that the world is to wax worse and worse, and after all our preaching the world is to fret away the borders of the church until nothing remains, do not call that message an evangel. Church history proves that the ages when that doctrine has been most preached have been followed by spiritual declension of the most serious sort. The only preaching which fits the facts is the preaching of the victorious, not a defeated, Christ. He is to be the world leader and He is mounting steadily and irresistibly to the high places of human hope. The first note, therefore, in the evangel must be the note of unconquerable faith. Men need to know that Christ is not dependent upon their poor suffrages. They need to get their eyes open to His matchless power. If there is to be a final Judgment, He will be there, not as suppliant, but as judge. We do so much pleading, and we assume so much of the "eternally feminine," that it needs for the

stirring of men who have blood in them, the bold strong presentation of authority and power. Hear Christ saying, "All power is given unto Me in heaven and in earth." He not only claimed it for Himself, but He showed men that He was King by right of His royal nature. So Pilate said when he saw Him in His deep humiliation. Even the Roman Procurator had spiritual vision enough to see a diadem on His brow that shone through the matted thorns and that shines to-day with ever increasing splendour. All art and literature, all moralities and philanthropies, hail Him King—the unmatched Galilean; He the power of every righteous throne; He the menace of every evil man and method, hastening them to their own undoing and waiting in patience till the world shall own Him King of kings. Stand the Man of Nazareth against all other men and gods, and marvel at the measureless altitude of His uplifted head. Bring the dusty pilgrims who have sought through all the ages for the Universal King that they may bring their homage, and hear them say, "We have seen His star and have come to worship Him." Turn the light on Him. Let critics cavil, let pessimists wail, there is one sufficient

answer: it is the "crystal Christ." Let us thunder out the climax of that first pentecostal sermon: "Let all the house of Israel know assuredly that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye crucified, both Lord and Christ." We may well assure ourselves and let all men understand that God has not begun a work which was too great for Him to accomplish; that He will never throw up His hands in the presence of a world sunk in sin and say, "I hoped to redeem it but the work is too great for Me." As surely as God is God the time will come when His holy purpose shall be accomplished.

The second note in the evangel is the humiliation of Christ. I see my own great want by the length of the chain let down to reach me. It is when I measure myself with the Christ of the cross that I see how miserable and undone I am, and it is then that I am most persuaded of His Kingship. If my lost condition was such as to send this royal soul to the cross for the love He had for me, I must answer His seeking call with a glad "I will!" You need not tell me I am a sinner. I know it when I look at Him. If He is the measure of a man, O wretched man that I am! I have

seen hundreds who said, "I am as good as other men," and they sat unmoved by all my appeals, but when they were minded to go with me to the cross, and let me show them Him who hung upon it, then there was no more spirit in them, and they said, "God be merciful to me a sinner." Now we are at the heart of the evangel. Here is good news indeed. Preach it as if it were. Let ours be the joy which the messenger has when he bears the pardon of the governor to the condemned. Let ours be the haste of one who fears he comes too late; and let every word declare the abounding delight of one who carries life to those who were dead. Dr. Dawson quotes Dr. Burton as saying in his Yale lectures: "It has been the sin of my life that I have not always taken aim. I have been a lover of subjects. If I had loved men more, and loved subjects only as God's instrument of good for men, it would have been better and I should have more to show for my labour under the sun."

If a man is to preach the cross he must himself be a crucified man. By that I mean not simply that he has known an hour when his earthly ambitions were nailed to the cross, but

rather that he shall daily prove himself to be the self-less man—one who counts not his own life and ease dear unto himself. It is the unselfish service that counts, and when the world sees the marks of the nails in the palms of the church, it will be no longer faithless but believing.

The third and irresistible note of the evangel is in the heart tone that thrills it. If you do not care for men, and "care to care," you cannot speak the word with power. You are a hireling and the sheep are not yours, and they know it. It is the voice that has laughter and tears in it that moves men's souls, and it does it because it is the voice of human sympathy. That is the note which the weary world misses in so much that is said from the pulpit. Years spent in college and seminary in gathering information about the history of the church and the Book lead unconsciously to the exalting to the first place of matters purely erudite. It is enough to humiliate the scholar to find by actual experience what a small part the things he has learned play in the work he is called to do. They are not without value, but they gain that value when relegated to the place they ought to occupy—that of helps and not ends.

I have said that it is the heart note that rises before every other in evangelistic preaching. Only the man with the yearning soul is of any account with the evangel. If he can sleep nights and be content days, whether men heed his message or not, it proves that he has a stony heart. Whatever outward perfections he has they are those of a marble statue and not of a living man. Why are we not burning with the zeal that consumed our Master and sent Him to nights of prayer and Gethsemanes of anguish? Is it our faith or our practice that is at fault? Do we believe that men are lost and that Christ alone can save them, or is it that men are conscious that our lives are too indolent and our lips too impure to sound so high a note? How insidious are the foes of a minister! Is he trimming his sails for some official port? What a miserable voyage he will make! Has he ambition to be known as a great preacher by critics of the form of things? How soon he will lose the power of his message! Does he seem to say, "Look at me and see how scholarly I am"? Then his critics will go out from his preaching as from any other performance, and the spiritual will say, "There was no cross and no Easter, and

we saw but a little man when we hoped to see Jesus only." How Sloth cuts the nerve of him who brings the evangel! If he has a corner in the study, or hides on the sofa, have at him! You two cannot occupy the same pulpit. Do not dawdle. Be in dead earnest, or the fine subtle power of your ministry is ended. If you have the heart note the expression of your message will be direct and genuine to the last degree. But of this matter of the yearning soul I speak more at length in another chapter.

In evangelistic preaching the simplicity of its form has much to do with the power of its effect. How many preachers are conscious of one vocabulary for use in the pulpit, and quite another which they use in daily intercourse, in the discussion of daily happenings and in the statement of their own feelings and purposes. It was said of Henry Clay that he made his friends with one vocabulary and lost the presidency with another. As we read many of the speeches which made reputations and careers a century ago, we wonder that the people endured such high-flown and bombastic talk! Our age will have none of it. It knows that the language which a man uses when he talks

about the things which interest him in daily life is the language that reveals the man. I listened in the courts to a man pleading for the life of his client, and I marked the words he used. Every one of them so simple that the most unlearned man in the jury knew its meaning. His message swayed him. He felt that it was life or death that day, and the dread alternative was in the venture of his speech. When a man the other day allowed himself in an appeal to the jury to substitute rhetoric for facts and conviction, the papers voiced the just indignation of the world. What a lesson is here for him who pleads for souls! What an impertinence our sesquipedalian words and heartless oratory really are in the sight of God and thoughtful men. What are theological subtleties when a soul is at stake? If one thinks that simple, soulful words are easily spoken, and that they are the sign of lack of preparation, let him try to use them, and he will discern his mistake. The great masters, and not the tyros, are the men of simple speech. Just in proportion as one's theme fills the soul of the cultivated man will his presentation of it become powerful. "It is with words as with sunbeams—the more they

are condensed the deeper they burn." Then, too, we must be careful not to talk of our own spiritual attainment in boastful superlatives. We must use a smaller vocabulary or get a larger experience.

Again our age is a direct one. It is the age of small books, of short addresses, of thirty-minute sermons—"with a leaning to the side of mercy." When a man talks as if he meant it, his soul flashing out at his eyes, his words throbbing with deep concern, art and method forgotten in the tremendous sweep of the evangel over his own soul, then men are likely to listen and to come again. Preaching is the art of persuasion in its highest form, and nothing that gives power with men is alien to it.

For preachers who have eyes to see a new day is dawning. The signs of the times are blood red in their intensity and no man who has any fitness to wear the prophet's garb or exercise his function can fail to heed them. Why is it that men like Hillis and Dawson are taking up Burton's lament as to the aimlessness of their past ministry, and are going to halls and parks and other strange places to preach the evangel? These men are liberal enough and literary enough not to be classed

with literalists and fanatics. They will tell you that they have seen a vision and heard a call, and they must be true to them or cease to preach. The critics have had their day and done their work. Some of them have laboured to good purpose, and our children will build tombs for some whom we have stoned. The negative critics have wrought their own undoing and in their unfair criticisms have quite destroyed themselves. The foundations of our faith, unmoved by scientific and philosophical pickaxe, seem stronger now than ever. But just now we are not talking much about critics, high or low, nor are we constrained above measure by either scientific or theological narrowness. Bishop Hall said long ago, "The most useful of all our theological books would be one with the title De Paucitate Credendorum,"—of the fewness of the things necessary to be believed. This, in substance, the people are saying to us to-day. They do not give first place to sermons on the puzzling books of the Bible. They are satisfied that they have been the victims of some religious pettifogging, and they are asking for bread and will not be satisfied with a stone. This cry was not born in the pulpit nor in the

homes of the wealthy but in the heart of the common people, and in that it followed in the footsteps of every great reformation from the days of Savonarola and of Galileo to the days of the Welsh revival. One of the marvels of our time is that men whom we have called liberals, or something worse, have been among the first to heed the call. They have stopped reading literary essays and have gone to preaching with tears in their voices. They have left their pulpits and preached from the tail of a cart. They have renounced the scholarly ease of one essay a week and have counted it a joy to preach bareheaded in the market every day and have said, in holy abandon, with Dr. Hillis, "What's the use of dying of bacilli when one might die of hard work?" What led most of us to preach was a passion for the souls of men. Has that passion cooled? One of our bishops recalled before a preachers' meeting the thrilling experience of his call to preach. He showed himself to us kneeling in the melting snow in an agony of prayer, and asked himself tearfully if he was willing to do the same thing now. Come back to the old love by way of the closet; come back to the old joy by way of the same old cross; preach

the old evangel, which is ever new, and preach it with a loving heart, and the world which has been cold to you, will crowd once more to listen.

XII

PULPIT POWER

MAY I still further press the matter of evangelistic preaching by a consideration of some additional elements of pulpit power.

It ought to be said at once that "preaching" —to use the fine phrase of Dr. Lyman—"is not an art, but an incarnation." Many a sermon over which the angels have covered their faces and wept was a fine piece of art. Possibly that came to be true because the preacher considered his sermon an end, not a means. It goes without saying that a sermon is a failure just in proportion as it falls short of producing the great result for which every true sermon is delivered. "That was a great sermon," say the preachers and the deacons and the elect ladies at the close of some convention or conference deliverance. What made it so? "Why, the argument was conclusive, the rhetoric brilliant, the illustrations were classical and interesting, and the gestures faultless." What will Jesus and Stephen and Paul say when a yardstick of that sort is brought

out to measure a great sermon? One cannot help recalling the old story of the physician lecturing upon a new surgical operation. "How many times have you performed this operation?" ask the doctors. "Sixty-five," is the answer. "How many of your patients recovered?" "They all died, but the operation is most brilliant." If a preacher would preach a great sermon, let him be convinced that it is life or death with some souls that day, and that they will take their fate at his hands.

It is a great hour when a surgeon holds a scalpel, at the end of which is life or death for the patient. It is a greater hour when a lawyer faces a jury, with the conviction that if he makes a mistake an innocent man will hang and a family be disgraced forever. But the greatest hour any human being ever faces is the hour when he stands as God's representative before a man hastening to his condemnation and commissioned to offer him a pardon that is to last for the eternities.

That is a thrilling story which is told of the old Scotch preacher, Donald Cargill, in "Men of the Covenant." His sermons were briefer than those of the majority of his brethren. Some spoke to him that he preached and

prayed short, saying, "Oh, sir, 'tis long betwixt meals and we a' are in a starving condition. All is good, sweet and wholesome which ye deliver, but why do you straiten us so much for shortness?" He answered like a man with a high commission: "Ever since I bowed a knee in good earnest to pray I never durst pray and preach with my gifts, and when my heart is not affected and comes not up with my mouth I always think it time for me to quit it. What comes not from my heart I have little hope that it will go to the heart of others." He did not pray at much length in public, Cargill said, "lest he should be praying with his own gifts and not with the divine Spirit's graces"; but he never wearied of private devotion. From his youth he loved the solitary place and more than once he continued whole nights in fellowship with his Father. He had his distinctive attitude in prayer. "He always sat straight upon his knees without resting upon anything, with his hands lifted up; and some took notice he died the same way, with the bloody rope around his neck."

Before one can preach an evangelistic sermon he must have an evangelistic heart. Many a man shrinks by nature from the di-

rectness, persistence, and struggle of a sermon which must bring victory or defeat upon the spot. His taste is shocked by it and he is fain to justify by false arguments some other course. Those only win in the sight of God and men who subordinate their inclinations to their convictions.

There must be manifest on the part of the preacher an absorbing, overmastering interest in the salvation of those to whom he preaches. He must speak "as a man in chains to men in chains." That interest need not show itself in ejaculations or tears. It is deeper than these. When a congregation knows its pastor is so profoundly interested in the salvation of his flock as to interrupt the ordinary flow of life's concerns, it will begin to be interested for itself. Dr. Hillis never did a better thing for himself or for his people than when, on assuming his Chicago pastorate, he begged his people not to burden him with social engagements, but to allow him opportunity for study and deep communion with spiritual things that he might become thereby God's prophet to their souls.

The price of shining is burning. If a man greatly lights the world he will consume the

oil of his life. The cross still conquers men, and he who will climb to it for the love he has will find a crown upon its rugged bars. The world has little use for the smug and comfortable parson, "the little, round, fat, oily man of God." It accuses him of living a complacent life, sharing little the hard conditions of toil, and seldom soiling his hands or cracking his sinews with the rough and rugged things which the average man knows too well. It looks in the tables of the actuaries and finds that clergymen are the best insurance risk, that they live longer than artisans or other professional men, and concludes it is because they look after themselves and moderate their toil and their exposure. No doubt the community is mistaken in its judgment, but it will do the cause of Christ much good for the average man to be convinced that the minister of to-day is like his Master in uncalculating toil, that he is in the world not to be ministered unto but to minister.

A good picture for every pastor's study is the scene at Newburyport with Whitefield, on the last night of his life, "Weary in his Master's work, but not of it," standing on the stairs of his humble home, holding a light in his hand

and talking to the people till the candle burned to its socket and went out. Then the old hero goes up to his chamber. As the light of the morning breaks, the lamp of his life goes out. There you have your burning and shining light.

John Wesley is said never to have had "a bad quarter of an hour." He could command sleep at any time and seemed a stranger to worry and depression. Some of us are not constituted like Wesley. In times of stress sleep will not come, and if we do not worry we are at least profoundly anxious. It is God's way with us; let us use it for His glory. If we cannot sleep we can spend the wakeful hours in such communion as will make the language of heaven natural to us when we enter the pulpit, and we shall illustrate to our people the fact which Joan of Arc affirmed to her judges: "My Lord God hath a book in which are written many things which the most learned clerk and scholars have never come across."

Do we not solace ourselves in the midst of our unfaithfulness by saying, "We will preach the Word and leave it to God to nourish it." The fact is the message cannot be left un-

watched of the pastor any more than the prescription can be left unwatched of the physician. There are indeed times when the pastor must wait in faith and stand still and see the glory of God but he must first be certain that he has done his full duty.

In speaking of power in the pulpit a word concerning the selection of themes will not be out of place. Let us choose great themes, for great themes stimulate to great preaching. Such themes are not of necessity philosophical, nor do they concern themselves mainly with apologetics. Least of all will they concern themselves with the technical attack or defense of criticism higher or lower. The exploitation of skepticism creates a cold wave in the atmosphere. Speaking to a New York millionaire who had in early life been greatly interested in the church and its work the writer asked: "Why are you less zealous than formerly? Have you become skeptical as to the truths you once held?" Almost savagely the millionaire replied: "I am weary with the constant attention which the ministers pay to skepticism. I am a member of many clubs and I meet on intimate terms many of the wealthy and influential men of New York. I know how they

feel concerning religion and the church. At heart they are orthodox. They believe in the great verities—God, sin, salvation, immortality. They do not care to sit through a discussion of the latest phase of German rationalism or English agnosticism. They feel the need of the appeal to conscience which they heard as boys and which has so largely disappeared from many pulpits. We know our duty, we need to be stirred up to do it." It is the will and not simply the intellect or the emotions that we must reach. Great courses of apologetics are fitting for universities and seminaries but in revival services the crisis is a crisis of life and to life must the appeal be made. A testimony is better than an argument and a fresh miracle in the transformation of a wicked life is the thing which brings conviction to wavering hearts. The creed we need to utter is the blind man's creed, "This I *know*, that whereas I was once blind now I see." A sermon aglow with positive beliefs does more than any other in the salvation of men. The Gospel applied is its own best defense.

XIII

SPECIAL REVIVAL PERIODS

It is true that every church should be in such a condition of spiritual alertness, that it would be in perfect harmony with the spirit of things for one to make profession of his purpose to lead a Christian life at any of the services of the church. It is to be hoped that in every church there may be from month to month those who will yield themselves to Christ, but it is also true that something more than this condition is necessary if the church is to do its greatest work in any community. There is a certain intensity which is the result of cumulative thought and effort which is necessary to bring the church to its highest efficiency and the community to the realization of its need. The concentration of the entire strength of faith and effort upon a particular point produces marvellous results.

Nothing can be more reasonable and philosophic than special and protracted revival services. It is the method adopted to push any great reform. It is the method of every po-

litical campaign. There is a power in it that is a wonder even to those who have most used it. But it must be pressed with holy daring. It must not stop short of victory. I have never in my ministry said, "We will observe a week of prayer, and if the service proves of sufficient interest, we will continue it the next week, and if we cannot stop then, we will add other days of service." I announced to my brethren early in the year, "We are going to take January next for revival services. Everything else must be laid aside. No services will be held in church save those which relate to this particular work. The meetings will be held every night for the entire month." If it is objected that God has set times to favour Zion, and that we have no right to say when that time shall be, I answer there is no greater heresy on earth than that idea. God's time is now. The whole air is full of Pentecosts which have never come down because there was no resting place for the cloven tongues. If there had been, Pentecosts would have fallen long ago.

I have heard of an old minister who said he had been pastor in a certain town for forty years. He found that the Lord came to that

town every seven years, and when asked to co-operate in a revival effort, said, "It is only three years since the last visitation and there is no use in asking God for a revival for four years." Are you saying, "I wonder if God will send us a revival"? You need not wonder! The angels in heaven wonder that you have not had one each passing year. The emphasis which I wish to note in these special meetings is that of cumulative power. I have held meetings for a week, and there was little response. Once or twice I have held meetings for two weeks without special evidence of revival power, but I have never held meetings for three weeks consecutively that something did not happen. You and your people cannot keep on your knees before God and work for Him faithfully face to face with your friends in their homes and places of business, for three consecutive weeks, without getting some marvellous results. It would be worth tens of thousands of converts to the Christian Church in America if our pastors would undertake it. Many a pastor has been defeated because he dared too little. He must enter his work with "Holy boldness." This last phrase I had occasion once to use in addressing a company of

ministers of different denominations. For some reason it seemed especially to impress one of our strong and well known preachers. He could not get it out of his mind. All the week it kept recurring to his thought and he found himself forced to shape his work for the following Sunday to harmonize with it. Up to that time he had seldom made a special appeal for men to seek God at the close of the morning service, but this thought so took possession of his soul that he called his officiary together on Sunday morning before the sermon, and told them his impressions, and that he should rely upon them to help in the morning service. At the close of the sermon he sent these men down the aisles, urging them to speak with the unconverted whom they knew, and when he gave the invitation, more than thirty men and women followed the pastor and his officers to the inquiry room, and gave their heart to God. The pastor said it was the greatest day in his ministry, and all due to an act of "Holy boldness." It is sometimes objected that the officers and members of the church will not sustain the pastor in special work of this kind. That matter is largely in his own hands. When the tender-

ness of a great yearning is upon him, the people will feel its power. The aroma of prayer will be about him, and all men will take knowledge of him that he has been with Jesus. The thoughtless may talk of "working up" an interest and call such special effort a man-made revival, but we have always found God ready to honour the work of men whose hearts were yielded up to work His holy purpose. It is a fair question to ask whether the man-element is more apparent in the stagnation of a dead church or in the efforts which make it possible for God to crown the work of faith with His sanction and abundant blessing.

The preacher must commune with God until he gets the burden of souls upon him. He must be so in love with those for whom Christ died that he will count everything else secondary to the winning of them. It is not enough to please men or even to stir them. They must be *won*. Here is the test of our ministry and of our spiritual power. There is a show of truth in the words we hear from honoured sources. "Evangelism is bringing the evangel or gospel into contact with the unsaved, and it is for contact, not conversion that the church is responsible." But that statement of the

truth is so partial that it is responsible for many a failure. Men have taken refuge in it from the result of a nerveless and half-hearted deliverance of the truth. God only can bring final deliverance to the soul, but until we have trodden the path towards the Promised Land to where the brine of the Red Sea is flying in our faces we have no right to stand still and wait His power. Even then God says to us as to Moses, "Speak to the children of Israel that they go forward." It is objected that the unconverted will not come to these special services and the result of them is almost entirely confined to the members of the church. Perhaps no question is more frequently asked me than this one, "How do you get the people to come to revival meetings?" My answer is, It is my custom to spend the forenoon in getting ready to preach at night, for I preach myself nearly every night during the revival services. The afternoon I spend visiting my parishioners. I go into the offices of the people and into their homes. I try to bring them face to face with Christ. To help me in find ing the places where I could visit with most hope of success, I have distributed at the Sunday services a card indicating interest in Chris-

tian things. On the first Sabbath of my revival meetings during the last few years these cards have been signed by persons not members of my church and not professing Christians, to the number of nearly a hundred. Now, then, I had the names and addresses of a hundred people. They had virtually said to me by that card that they would like to see me and talk to me about their souls. So I had only to see them and say, I have received your card, and I have come to talk with you. I learn of their cares and sorrows and needs, of their temptations and their heart yearnings. I become intensely interested for their salvation, and I bring the matter to them, urging a present decision. Almost every day, in parlour or office, I have had two, three or half a dozen people promise before God that they would give themselves to Christ, and that they would make a public confession of their desire to serve Him, and kneeling together we have dedicated ourselves to God. When I went to the revival services that night, I went with jubilant heart. I looked the audience over and I said, "Yes, there they are. There will be something done to-night." I preached as though I expected something. When the

three or more that I knew about arose to their feet upon my invitation, there were a dozen others in the room who saw it and said to themselves, "I had no idea that these men were religiously interested; if they are concerned for their souls, it is time I thought about this myself," and so they joined t' others in their holy quest, and going to the altar they found peace, and there was joy in heaven for wanderers coming home.

It is often objected that a reaction is sure to follow such special interest. That need not be true. Your interest will simply take another form. Now you must put your special effort into the training of those who come into the church. Look after them carefully. In converts' classes, or by other method of religious instruction, urge them to have a share in all the activities of the church. Give special impulse to the work of the Sunday-school. Begin some special philanthropic work that your community may need. In a score of ways the alert pastor will be able to direct the spiritual activities of his converts so that there shall be no signs of reaction either with them or with the church. They are personally acquainted one with another. Their

own pastor and their own friends were specially interested in bringing them to Christ, and they will never cease to be careful, and can readily be built into the fabric of the church.

XIV

METHOD OF REVIVAL WORK

ELSEWHERE, we have spoken of the necessity of personal devotion if we are to win the community to Christ. In the following chapter we will give some methods that have been approved by experience in evangelistic service.

1. It is of the utmost importance that the officiary of the Church should become interested in these meetings. Nothing will interest them so much as to be taken into the pastor's confidence and made sharers in his plans. Months before the meetings are to be held, the matter should be talked over in official meetings. Instead of a long and profitless session on financial incidentals, go to prayer. What does the Church stand for? How came you into it? What proof are you making of your stewardship? Why are you an official? In what are you an example to the flock of Christ? Heart-to-heart searching; earnest prayer to God that they be not cumberers of the ground; a cry that they may be sharers in the coming of the kingdom—such exercises

as these under the direction of a spirit-filled pastor will make the deadest board meeting a pentecostal season. Too much cannot be said about the pastor's attitude. He must wait before God until he has absolute faith in the coming of the Holy Spirit, and be fairly on tiptoe with expectancy. There is no place here for faithless spies. If the pastor sees only the Anakim and is a grasshopper in their sight and in his own, he had better run before the battle is on. A grasshopper's legs are the best part of him and they are made for flight. If a pastor cannot influence his own officiary, the chances of influencing the world and the Church are not great. He need not win them alone or at one session. If he has but three like-minded with himself, these four can lay hold of a fifth, and the weight of influence and persuasion will speedily be too heavy for any but the most hardened to throw off. In the meantime apply the same methods to the Church. Let the prayer-meetings have the ring of a great expectancy. Get the dish right side up against the time of refreshing, and unexpected showers may bless the thirsty land. More than once when we were planning for a revival season the revival broke out

in the prayer-meeting and every week saw many conversions. Side track all save the devotional meetings of the Church. Have at least one month in the year when the Church can say of its religious work, "This one thing I do."

2. Advertise the meetings so that the community will know that something is going on. Gold dollars cannot be sold even for ninety cents unless the community know about the matter. The newspapers will generally lend their assistance if properly approached. Do not ask the editor to write the notice. Write that yourself and hand it to him. He may not publish it as you have written it, but find out by repeated attempts what he will publish and cultivate the newspaper instinct.

Make your membership a board of publicity. Give them a little card that can be put into all their letters. Give them a window card that can be put in the grocery store window or in any shop or store where they may work. Have a pretty card, small and nicely printed, that they can hand to their friends or to any stranger they may meet. Have some proper notice on the church edifice calling attention to the meetings, and above all, have plenty of

light both outside and inside the Church. Every theatre is a blaze of light, almost blinding the eyes of the passer-by, while our church entrances are so gloomy that they look by contrast like the door of a sepulchre. If our Christ is the light of the world, why not make His Church the light of the street where it stands?

3. Now we come to the inside of the Church and the service itself. Begin on time, and begin with the singing of the great hymns of the Church. Perhaps we may as well speak at this point of the matter of music in the service. Nothing is of so much help in this direction as a large and well-trained chorus. Make much of it, but do not cheat the people of the right to sing. The Welsh revival was a singing revival, and since the days of the Lollards the Church has greatly prospered where it has fulfilled the Apostolic injunction,—"Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord." The pastor will doubtless seek a gospel soloist and he will doubtless have trouble in securing one that will be satisfactory. The demand for men and women whose ability and consecration are

of the first order is greater than the supply, a remark which is equally true in many fields. For the last generation the evangelistic preacher has usually had a singer to help him in the service. Men have gone out "two and two," and their names have been coupled in popular speech. It is Moody and Sankey, Torrey and Alexander. In the cases named, and in others which might be mentioned, the singer was as truly a man with a message as was the preacher, and thousands of men have been swept into the kingdom by waves of holy song. But not every pastor can secure a Sankey or an Alexander, and we are convinced that much of the solo singing in the average revival meeting is an impertinence in the sight of God, a mortification to the pastor and an obstacle to the truth. To take some irreligious singer and allow him to sing because he has a good voice is to show utter disregard of the Holy Spirit. Such a service is a distinct hindrance to revival work, if indeed it does not completely negative the pastor's efforts. An "artistic" singer, an irreligious singer and a poor singer are each a burden which may damage a revival service beyond remedy. If you have some one who has a

sweet voice and a pure, religious life, who can sing a simple and soulful invitation with as much yearning of heart as the preacher knows, by all means let him sing. By such songs men are lifted up to God. But be sure that a good singer does not sing a poor song. In songs the goats far outnumber the sheep, and the sentimental ditties that have palms and pearls and stars and angels and crowns and other things that sound religious, but have no real thought, are an affliction to thoughtful people, both saints and sinners. For music, nothing is better than the great hymns of the Church, sung by the great congregation. Let such take the place of solos of doubtful merit and melody.

4. Of the method to be followed in preaching we speak elsewhere, and discuss at length in another chapter methods of drawing the net. I wish to say here what I have elsewhere hinted, that the man to preach in those services is the pastor himself. While much can be said of the wisdom of employing evangelists in special cases, the purpose of this book is to help every pastor to become his own evangelist. This is the crying need of the Church to-day. This duty must not be laid upon another.

Any man can move men to God, when he is himself moved of God. It is not in human nature to stand the pleading of a breaking heart. I therefore say to every pastor, "Do your own preaching." If you feel the need of the help of your brethren, get it in some ministerial retreat. But when it comes to the revival service, throw your whole soul into it and depend upon God and your Church for help. Good results have doubtless come from meetings in which several pastors have preached on succeeding nights, but careful and long-continued observation has convinced us that more is lost than is gained by sharing responsibility with others.

Face this issue with "Holy boldness" and absolute trust in God. Let it be fully understood by your soul that there is no compromise, no retreat, no surrender. The battle must be fought to a finish and at the end there will be thrilling victory or ignoble defeat for the work of God. Nothing but a crisis like that will nerve some men to their work. The harder the battle, the nearer is God to the man who fights for Him in faith.

Perhaps I have already spoken with sufficient fullness concerning the method of evangel-

istic preaching, but let me add, preach the good news and preach it with a bugle note. Do not use the VOX HUMANA or the TREMOLO stop too much. Pull out the VOX DIVINA, and now and then let on the DIAPASON. We have not sufficiently exalted the Christ as Lord and King. We keep Him nailed to the cross as if we had forgotten that His life knew only six hours on the cross and unnumbered ages on the throne. The prints of the nails will never fade out of His palms, but they are hidden by the sceptre which He holds.

What a mine the Bible opens to the seeker after evangelistic truth! People are always interested in life. The biography of the great men of the Bible will never cease to charm and move the world. The life-story of the men of old is as fresh as the last pang of our own conscience. Nothing can be more effective than the experiences which made Abraham, Jacob and Esau, Moses, Joshua and David the men which they became. These are the men who people the Hall of Fame opened in the eleventh chapter of Hebrews, and their lives will move men until the ages are no more.

What material the messages of the prophets furnish, to send home the truths of God to

sinning men! Above all are the words of Jesus—words of spirit and life. A strange power is in them, and the miracles they work to-day prove their divine origin. Still, as of old, blind men see, deaf men hear, lepers are cleansed and the dead come to life at His word.

5. For the use of personal workers it is very desirable to have a card with a simple statement of purpose, which will be a convenient form of registering the decision of any who are ready to begin a Christian life. The card we use has on it these words:—"Accepting Jesus Christ as my personal Saviour, I desire to confess my purpose to lead henceforth a Christian life." We have found it specially advantageous to organize our workers into an Evangelistic Committee, with each person pledged to actually bring into the Church at least one convert. We have furnished each one with a card and duplicate and have put each name down on the roll. The duplicate is to be returned to the pastor with the names of those who will join the Church. Frequent meetings are called to inquire how many have succeeded in bringing one, and how many have multiplied that number. The successful workers

tell of their method, and all are greatly stimulated. The card and duplicate read as follows: —

EVANGELISTIC COMMITTEE.

Looking to the Holy Spirit for direction, I am willing to undertake the winning of at least one soul to a personal choice of Christ and to admission into membership in His Church.

Name . . . . . .

Address . . . . . .

DUPLICATE.

Looking to the Holy Spirit for direction, I am willing to undertake the winning of at least one soul to a personal choice of Christ and to admission into membership in His Church.

Name . . . . . .

The following persons will come into Church fellowship: —

Name . . . . . .

Name . . . . . .

Name . . . . . .

XV

DRAWING THE NET

We take it for granted that the sermon is such as leads up to and makes necessary the drawing of the net. It is at this point that many pastors and evangelists fail. Here, both spirit and method have room for full play. To ask men to decide for Christ at the close of a sermon which has only remotely suggested the necessity for such action is a useless thing. The whole course of the sermon must direct the thought of the listeners towards this act as the fitting climax of the service. Every argument, illustration and appeal must converge upon this moment. This is the "Valley of Decision"; now is the accepted time. What is your answer to the call of God?

I know of no place in Christian work where the promise, "According to your faith be it unto you," applies with greater force than in the giving of the invitation at the close of the sermon. If that is given in a doubtful manner, it may as well not be given at all. The audience must see faith and expectancy in the

preacher's whole appearance or it will not respond. He must show that he believes in God and in the manifestation of His presence at that particular time.

But some timid pastor says, "That's just the point. I am afraid. I do not believe anything is going to be done, and I show it. Can you help me?" There is a very plain course indicated in God's Word. Nothing generates faith like prayer. Pray earnestly, "Lord, increase our faith." If you need to have something tangible on which to build your faith, we have found an excellent help, which we have described in another chapter. Go out in the afternoon to those in the community most likely to give themselves to God. Keep at your work until you find some whose hearts are tender and who will promise to come to the meeting at night and make public confession of their purpose to seek Christ. Now when you see these persons in the audience, your faith will kindle. You have the assurance that your appeal will not go unregarded, and when some have come, others are almost sure to follow.

The following methods of invitation have been found useful. Ask the congregation to

kneel or bow in prayer. When all are thus engaged, ask any who wish the prayers of the people that they may act up to the light they have, to rise. Call upon some, who can be trusted, to pray, and ask seekers to rise during the prayers. Again, ask the congregation to rise and sing some sweet hymn of invitation. After each verse speak briefly, and ask the unconverted to come to the altar. We have frequently asked those who were converted before they were twenty years of age to rise and have asked if there were not others of that age who would join them. Applying this method to different ages has helped many to make their first public move. It is often helpful to ask those who have friends for whom they are specially praying to gather at the altar. The sight of friends and relatives there whom the unconverted knew were praying for them has often led them to join those at the altar. Requests for prayers on behalf of friends have often been very effectual. Probably no method is so effective in moving people to declare their purpose to begin a Christian life as the use of a card to be signed and handed to the pastor.

Directly after the sermon, a card should be

handed to each person in the audience, whether professed Christian or not. While the people are signing these cards, the pastor may give a word of tender exhortation, or some impressive hymn or solo may be sung. When proper time has been given for the signatures, all the cards, signed and unsigned, should be collected, and all signatures handed by the collectors to the pastor.

Whether these persons are converted remains to be seen. The signing of a card may mean much or little, according to the attitude and temperament of the signer; but it means this at least in the case of every honest signature, "I am interested for my soul's salvation. I am doing this as an act that will help to put me in right relations to God." They have committed themselves as seekers after God. The way is now open for the pastor and workers to bring every influence to bear that will tend towards the desired result.

If the church is accustomed to an "Altar Service," urge all seekers to come to the altar, whether or not cards have been used. Now is the time to settle the question forever. Hold the meeting with a firm grip. Do not try doubtful experiments. Do not ask a stranger

to offer prayer or run the risk of "strange fire" in answer to a general invitation. If no one comes to the altar, do not be discouraged and do not stop. This is the crucial moment. Hold steadily and happily on. Vary your invitation,—sing a verse, give an incident, but hold on. The most fruitful period of the meeting is usually the last fifteen minutes. Possess your soul in faith and patience and do not cease until victory comes.

If the inquiry room is preferred to the altar, the exercises which were preliminary to the altar services will still be in place. There are times when it is wise to allow that part of the audience not interested directly in the altar service to pass out during the singing of a hymn. The pastor will then feel that he is surrounded by those who are sympathetic, to some degree at least, with the service, and he will feel at liberty to hold as long a meeting as need may require. If the after service is held in the room where the sermon was preached, we have often found it well to hold a short service of testimony after those who wished to go had passed out. This centres the attention of all upon Christian experience. Often in asking young people to decide for

God, we have requested those who had formerly confessed Christ to come forward and give, in a word, their reason for so doing, and remain with the pastor. In a large congregation we have often had fifty or a hundred young men thus standing at the altar. This was a most impressive object lesson and one which moved others to take the step which these had recommended. The exalting of Christian experience is of great value in a revival service.

If another room is chosen for the after service, it should be easily reached and conveniently arranged. Great wisdom and solicitude will be necessary to induce those who ought to go to venture, and the most devoted and the wisest Christians should go with the pastor and help in personal work.

We have indicated some of the methods which experience has approved, but in revival work the spirit is of more account than the method. A heart full of love and zeal is sure to find some winning way of approach.

XVI

UNION MEETINGS

THE question of union evangelistic services is an open one. There is much to be said in favour of a movement that shall interest all the churches in a community in some general religious effort. If properly conducted, the churches are brought nearer together, pastors and members become better acquainted with one another, and the town or city is edified to see their united front in aggressive spiritual work. I have frequently known of movements for civic righteousness which have resulted from union services. During the last few years many cities have been greatly moved towards God by union services conducted by accredited evangelists. The results which have attended them, so far as the general community was concerned, would seem to be much greater than would have resulted under more limited services in individual churches. The public press gives notices of the services and prints extracts from the sermons. People who do not go to church have

their curiosity aroused and frequently are led to attend these meetings to their lasting benefit. All this and much more can truthfully be said in favour of union evangelistic meetings.

As a matter of fact, however, the most successful meetings I have known in the number of conversions and actual additions to the membership of the churches have not been union meetings. In the union services the sense of personal responsibility on the part of pastor and members seems to be lessened. It is very easy to shirk a general duty. There is always the feeling that somebody else will do the work, and that somebody else is quite as responsible as are we for the success of the enterprise. The writer once received an invitation to hold union services from a committee representing sixty churches in a great city. He was promised an audience room that would hold 3,000 people, and assured of the sympathy and support of the sixty pastors. He was unable to undertake the work and wrote to the committee, making this suggestion: If your sixty pastors will each hold special meetings in his own church, if only a hundred persons are present at each service, that will make, in the

aggregate, 6,000 people, at least, twice as many as you would have in your union service, and if sixty pastors, drawing their official men about them, will give themselves wholly to this special work, each in his own church, among those whom he personally knows, and the responsibility for whose salvation rests in a special manner upon him, we are persuaded that the number of conversions will be many times greater, and the additions to the several churches will be greatly increased over that which would result from general services, and a sense of personal victory and blessing will abide with every church, which would be impossible under the other conditions. I am persuaded that a great element in spiritual victory is that the church and pastor must feel in some way that they are dependent solely upon God and themselves. If success does not come no one can be blamed but themselves. The battle is on. There are no reserves to be called up. It is a fight to the finish, and victory will be theirs if only they will do their full duty. There can be no defeat if they will follow God fully as did Caleb. The purpose of this book throughout, is an appeal to the individual church and pastor and member.

Here must lie the victory. It is the crux of the whole situation. The sooner we are ready to pay the price, the sooner we shall win. There are a few accredited evangelists in our country. They are kept busy all the time, and could multiply themselves indefinitely, if only they were able to do it, but they can be in but one place at a time. Only a score of cities at the most can expect to have the advantage of their services in any given year. What is to become of the thousands of cities that cannot secure them? If the work of Christ in America depends upon these men, great and powerful as they are, and honoured of God as they unquestionably are in the winning of men, there will yet be awful dearth of spiritual interest, and evil forces will gain victories throughout the length and breadth of our land. The only hope in the winning of our land to Christ rests upon the individual pastor and the individual church. If we can have a hundred thousand pastors who are inspired of God and yield themselves to His holy purposes, and if only a score of members were to join each of them in uttermost devotion, this would give us a power in every town and city which would be simply irresistible. While

admitting all that can be said in favour of union services, we still insist upon the individual pastor and the individual church cultivating their own field as the ideal of Christian service and the centre of evangelistic power.

XVII

EVANGELISM IN THE SUNDAY-SCHOOL

It is enough to make us thoughtful when we reflect that the problem of the Church of God in America a generation hence must be settled in the Sunday-school and settled now. Of the present condition Trumbull has well said: "America has been practically saved to Christianity by the Sunday-school."

Twelve millions of students, most of them in the formative period of their lives are within easy touch. They are eager to know the truth and so susceptible to good impressions that Jesus said, "Of such is the kingdom of heaven."

Have we met our obligations with the children? Dr. Goucher gives us facts which humiliate us beyond measure. He says, "Eighty-seven per cent. of the church members in this country were Sunday-school scholars. Yet it is estimated that only twenty per cent. of the Sunday-school scholars are brought into the church while they are in the school, and only twenty per cent. join after leaving the school. That is, on the average, in every class of five,

one is converted while in the school, one after leaving it, and the other three go away from their teacher unsaved and die in that condition. What an arraignment of our methods and devotion these facts present. There is nothing more imperative than a consecrated application of a sane method of spiritual work among our youth. The officers and teachers in our Sunday-schools hold the key to the situation as to the progress of the church and fearful will be their condemnation if they are not true to their high calling.

It is because we are deeply impressed by this fact that we give in this volume so much attention to evangelism in the Sunday-school. It is personal evangelism in the highest sense that we are to inculcate. The teacher's personality is the greatest factor in winning the scholar to Christ. If that personality is unselfish and consecrated miracles of grace may be wrought but if it is self-indulgent and untrue it must answer for the spiritual death of those whom it might have saved.

To speak on the definite presentation of the evangel to our classes opens the whole question of individual soul-winning, and this is the key to evangelism in the Sunday-school. Charles

M. Alexander, the singing mate of Dr. Torrey, tells us that he worked in the Moody Bible Institute for two years without doing personal work. He simply did the singing and went home when that was done, but he soon became convinced that personal work was the one thing he ought to be doing. When he was in London he called upon Mr. Stead, the greatest interviewer of the age, and said to him, "I have always wondered how in the world you interviewed these people. Start on me; I want to see how you do it." Stead turned his big bulk and big eyes towards him and said suddenly, "What are you in London for?" Alexander's comment is, "It made me shake but I have never forgotten it." As a teacher, ask yourself in all seriousness the question, "Why am I here, what can I do to win, and how shall I know when I have won?" You can teach botany in your class, but your teaching is a failure if your botany does not lead to the Rose of Sharon. There are good lessons in geology, but the rock you are after is the Rock of Ages. The geography of Bethlehem and Calvary it is worth your while to make plain, but no one would care where these places are but for the things which happened there. Paul

dismisses Greek philosophy with the scant courtesy of a brief sentence and fastens that episode to his life work with so loose a connective as a disjunctive conjunction. All these things may have their value. Anything that enforces and illustrates the truth is of use, but it is the truth and not the illustration that is to occupy the centre of the picture. There is a lesson in the old story of the artist who painted the Last Supper with such elegance of detail on the cup in the Master's hand that it quite outshone the Master's face. Ah, teacher and preacher, the Master's face must be the centre of our picture! And the personal surrender of each heart to Him is the supreme object of all our teaching.

To do this personal heart-to-heart work is a very difficult thing for many teachers. They shirk from invading sacred territory, and feel that the personality of the scholar should be respected to the extent that he should take the initiative—and nothing personal should be said by the teacher until the scholar has invited it.

I do not for a moment contend that such an attitude on the part of the teacher indicates that he has no piety in his own heart and no conscientious desire to do faithful work. While

it is true that the first prerequisite of evangelistic work is the evangelistic heart, not every teacher who has the evangel on his heart can deliver it. I know of nothing so necessary at this point as prayer. I confess that I have found it difficult to do this kind of work, and I found it necessary to seek a strength greater than my own. The impelling power and sustaining grace of prayer is wonderful. Things which were impossible before become easy now. The mountain is removed and cast into the sea and a holy ardour fills your heart to bring the good news of salvation to those who need it without regard to their knowledge of the need.

In order to nourish and develop this power it is necessary to keep it in constant use. If you ask how to begin, the advice of Mr. Moody to Dr. Torrey is as sensible as it is brief. "Go at it." Here, as everywhere else in the Christian life, the worst thing that can be done is to do nothing. Dr. H. Clay Trumbull, that master of individual soul-winning says, "The experience with my first young convert in the army encouraged me in my individual work. I saw that it were better to make a mistake in one's first effort at a personal religious conversation

and correct that mistake afterwards than not to make any effort. There can be no mistake so bad in working for an individual soul for Christ as the fatal mistake of not making any honest endeavour."

There is a mistaken notion entertained by many teachers that ought to be corrected. Teachers frequently say, "I do not dare to speak to my young people about personal religion lest I shall offend them." Let me say in reply, you quite misunderstand the situation. You will offend the average scholar by not speaking to him about his soul, and probably by your failure you will lose your influence with him in other directions. He knows why you are in your place. If you are honest you made a solemn contract with God and your own soul to teach His Word—to teach it without reserve, and to put the first things first. The scholar came to your class with a distinct understanding as to what you would undertake to do. His parents also entrusted you with their child, expecting that you would do the thing which God and the Church had commissioned you to do, and which, by accepting that commission, you promised to undertake. Your class came to you for bread, and

if you offer them but a stone they will not be slow to detect the imposition; and they will rate you accordingly.

If we are ready for personal work the method of it will now claim our attention. Winning souls is in one sense an art. It must be practiced in order to obtain proficiency, and we must study the best method of conversation. There was wisdom in Father Taylor's oft-repeated remark, "Let your conversation be seasoned with salt. Don't use a whole handful of it." An impressive five minutes may be of greater service in winning a young heart than a half hour spent in steady talk upon one theme. One clear cut sentence will fasten itself upon a child's mind, never to be shaken off, and will bear fruit through life; the approach must be in such form as to conciliate rather than antagonize. Paul was wise when instead of thundering against the Athenians for their idolatry he graciously said, "I perceive that you are very religious." But this kindly method must lack neither zeal nor conscience. Uncle John Vassar was a good example of the zealous Christian. One day he noticed in the hotel corridor a gentleman and his wife engaged in conversation. Soon the gen-

tleman went out, leaving the lady alone. She was disengaged and was apparently a stranger and Uncle John approached her. In his genial way he passed from the commonplaces of greeting to the matter that was on his heart, and in a few minutes he was talking with her about her soul. She had once been a member of the Church, but a worldly husband, and the cares which wealth brings, had turned her away from her Christian life. Her eyes filled with tears under the earnest exhortation of the man of God and she promised she would come back to the good way. While they were talking the husband returned and Uncle John withdrew. "Who was that man and what was he talking to you about?" "I do not know his name," said his wife, "but he was talking with me about my Christian life." The husband noticed her tears and said, "Well, he had better have been about his business." "Ah," said she, "if you had heard him you would have thought he *was* about his business."

One of the most successful teachers of boys whom we have ever met is a recent convert from Romanism. His method of instruction is very interesting. The great and solemn

truths are presented in the most impressive manner. There is no attempt at story telling. There is almost nothing to provoke a smile or to divert the attention from the great truths being presented. High ideals are constantly set forth. From being disorderly and hard to manage the boys have become models of good behaviour, and the parents speak of the entire transformation of the boys in their attitude towards religion in their home life. It is a mistaken notion that boys cannot be held to the contemplation of great themes. High ideals are nowhere so powerful and fascinating as to the hearts of youth. The moral and religious nature vie with the physical in the demand for exercise and opportunity, and that teacher and parent is wisest who meets this demand in all eagerness and in all serious concern.

XVIII

WAYS OF REACHING THE YOUNG

THE question of where and how to approach a scholar religiously must be answered largely by the scholar's temperament. Much can be done in the class. The incidental word which seems to come without premeditation, with no set purpose to produce immediate action, becomes a nail in a sure place to those who are thoughtful and intent upon the teacher's every word.

Some incident of the lesson will have force far beyond all laboured argument if it seems to come in a natural way and the scholar is left to draw his own conclusions. Such was the dialectic method of Jesus. While His parables had in them the most telling lessons, those lessons were all the more effective because they seemed so far apart from formal religious truth.

There is another class of scholars that will see nothing that is not actually forced upon their attention by repeated and definite statement. With them it must be "line upon line

and precept upon precept." "Why do you tell that child the same thing twenty times over?" said the father of the Wesleys to their mother. "Because nineteen times are not enough," said the wise Susannah. These oft-repeated maxims are the ones that remain with a child and bear good fruit when the lips that spoke them can speak no more.

No study of nature can compare with the study of the child-nature. The teacher whose soul i. not stirred by it must be lacking either in hea ' or heart. What experiments can be so full f interest as those which are rewarded by the kindling of a soul and the consecration of a life? Be watchful, therefore, and let wisdom wait upon devotion, that we may know the truths which most easily influence each child life.

It is this personal work that counts for most in the winning of the world. Dr. Henry Clay Trumbull, than whom few have been more skillful in addressing great assemblies, wrote, a little time before his death: "Looking back upon my work in all these years I can see more direct results of good through my individual efforts with individuals than I can know of through all my spoken words to thousands

upon thousands of persons in religious assemblies, or all my written words on the pages of periodicals or of books. Reaching one person at a time is the best way of reaching all the world in time."

It is important that something should be said about the time and place for presenting personal truth to the scholar's mind. If the teacher's duties begin and end with the hour of the school session, of course my question is already settled, and equally, of course, the teacher who so believes and acts is a cumberer of the ground and takes the place of a better man. The teacher in the school or college who does nothing for his scholars outside of the recitation hour is soon asked to resign. In our common schools the successful teacher takes the parents into his confidence. He asks them to visit the school. He inquires about the scholar's habits and characteristics and asks the coöperation of home influences in making his work successful.

These facts open a vast field to us by way of suggestions in the prosecution of Bible study with the young. If we are asked when to present the personal choice of Jesus Christ to a scholar, we have no hesitation in our answer.

Children are imitators. They may imitate the good as well as the bad. Many a boy has been led to give his heart to God because his friends had already done so or were waiting to go with him in such a step. The class presentation of this choice is therefore wise and may bring great results. But we are certain that many are so constituted that they will not consider so serious a matter in so public a way. The most conscientious are likely to hesitate if pressed to decision in the class. They will not take the step because some one else has done so. They must think it over in private, and their indifference or their hostility must be overcome in a personal way quite remote from the method of class persuasion.

Invite the scholar to your home. Become interested in his work, in his studies, in *him*. Let him feel that nothing which concerns him is alien to you. Then you can present the matter which is of supreme interest and gain a friendly hearing. Or if you cannot invite the scholar to your home, you may go to his, but you will need great wisdom to make that visit greatly count. Possibly his parents are not Christians; then you must win them. Perhaps they are nominal Christians, and yet—

alas, the pity and the shame of it—do nothing to lead their own sons or daughters to give their hearts to Christ. Nay, more—their home life may be such that it gives the lie to all their profession, and constitutes the chief barrier you will have to overcome in your work of winning a soul. If you undertake to urge a scholar to come to Christ in the presence of a hostile or indifferent parent, you have committed a blunder, if not a sin. If you cannot bring father or mother to become your ally, a visit to the park or a trolley ride with your scholar, or any one of a score of opportunities which present themselves, will be better than a visit in a worldly or indifferent home.

Let us lay siege to that home if we care for the weal of its members as well as the weal of the community. It is not too much to say that half the infidels of the country would have been lovers of God if they had been rightly nourished at home. We shall spend our time to little purpose if we have only one hour a week in which to instruct our youth and then send them for all the other hours of the week to hear and do the things that overthrow our teaching.

In this connection we wish to call the attention of superintendents and pastors to the great advantages that result from the holding of mothers' meetings. No part of our work has paid us better returns. A social, with pleasing features, has been arranged, and all the mothers connected with one or all the departments of the school receive a neat card of invitation. After a brief social chat and an informal introduction of the mothers to one another by the teachers and workers there is a brief address by the superintendent, in which a report is made of the attendance and other items of interest in connection with the sessions of the school during the quarter. The fact that the parents can fill the school by kindly urging their children to come, is dwelt upon, and incidents are related showing how happy the children are in their fellowship with one another and with their teachers. Then follows a pleasing entertainment by members of the school in part and in part by the best talent that can be secured. After this light refreshments are served by the officers and teachers. No mother is left without personal attention, and the effort is made to have each teacher come into the kindliest

personal relations with the mothers of her class. The mothers and teachers compare notes, and then seek to be mutually helpful in the development of the young people committed to their care.

The pastor is always present, and does more pastoral work here than could be accomplished in many days in the usual way. His interest in the children gives him a warm place in the hearts of the mothers, and they are interested to have the children in touch with him. The brief address which the pastor gives at the close of the entertainment he counts as one of the greatest opportunities of his ministry. The outline of the address at the meeting preceding Decision Day is something as follows:

No one has so many cords drawing them to Christ as has a mother. God has given her an unspeakable dignity. He has allowed her to kindle a spark which will still shine on when the stars have burned down to their sockets and gone out. Once your child was not; he will never cease to be, and what he is for all the eternities depends upon you more than upon any other agency in the world. God gave you a soul to train, not for yourself

but for Him, not for time but for eternity. You are concerned to know what he will do, but the thing that interests God and the angels is, What will he *be*. Character is greater than place. Your child is here not to make a living but to grow a soul. What you can do to help in that work must be done now. A little while and it will be too late. There is only one chance out of four that your child will become a Christian after he is twenty years old.

If you have not given your own heart to God, how can you train another life for Him? If, by and by, you should stand on the outside of a grated door and your boy from the inside of his prison cell should say, "Mother, you never showed me the way to a Christian life by your own example, you never guided me into the path which would have kept me from this shame," what could you say? Absolutely nothing. You knew the Christian path was the path of safety, but you did not take it. You knew the snares of the fowler were spread for the feet of your sons and daughters, but you did not warn them of their danger, nor lead them to Christ, their only helper. And now it is too late! May God

in His mercy save you from a shame like that! There are few mothers who will not be moved by a heart-felt appeal of that sort.

XIX

THE PREPARATION FOR DECISION DAY

When asked at what time the training of a child should begin, Oliver Wendell Holmes answered "a hundred years before he is born." If that was a wise answer, it will also be wise in a more limited field to say concerning the matter of preparation for Decision Day that it should begin at least as soon as the child joins the Sunday-school. There should be a steady trend towards one result—the personal choice of Jesus Christ as Redeemer and Guide on the part of each scholar.

In spiritual as in all other matters it is of incalculable advantage to have a particular point to work towards and a definite time at which one should arrive. We so easily excuse ourselves and allow procrastination to wait upon indifference that we need a frequent Day of Judgment. It is indecision which slays us, and if we are to amount to anything, we must not simply approximate,—we must actually decide.

Lest we should be misunderstood, we hasten

to say that it would be a calamity to teach that there is only one day of decision in the entire year, and that any who do not settle the great question of the soul then must wait another year. Some fruit will mature quicker that others, but in nature there is a general harvest-time for which the farmer makes preparation as for a fitting and expected thing, and we cannot do otherwise in our work. There is a time to plant the seed and a time to nourish and cultivate it, but if there is no time to reap and no fruit upon the vine in time of harvest, we are but poor husbandmen and we have nothing to show for our toil under the sun.

Agreed that we must make Decision Day an event of great importance, it is worth our while to see in what way we can best prepare ourselves to reap a proper harvest.

Our first preparation must be of the spirit. As we near the day we ought often to go to our closets and pray with increasing longing and deepening vision. In the realm of chemistry and of physics there are great laws of affinity which underlie all processes, and in the realm of the spirit it is not otherwise. Like produces like. For the best results the teacher

must needs cultivate a rapt, a tender and an eager spirit. Only when we are sensitive to the moving of the Holy Spirit will we find others responsive to us. It was this sensitiveness which gave Brainerd power "to open the infinite riches of divine grace and this in such a manner, with such freedom and pertinency of pathos and application to the consciences, I am sure, I never could have made of myself by the most assiduous application of the mind."

Unless one's soul is stirred to preparation by the importance of the day so soon to come, his scholars will be unmoved. If it is not worth his while to do every last thing, that he may be in touch with the Infinite and filled with compelling power, it is doubtful whether his scholars will feel the importance of inclining their hearts unto God, that they may hear His message and live.

Secondly, It is highly important that a spirit of devout expectancy should pervade the school. Short prayer meetings at the close of the Sunday-school hour, or better still, a short season of prayer directly following the lesson, in which the superintendent and pastor shall bear an important part, will greatly help in

the development of that spirit. These are the days when pastor, superintendent and teacher should impress upon the school that Christianity is not primarily a system to rebuild a human ruin. Thanks to the mercy of God, it may become that if awful exigencies require, but the blessedness of its promulgation lies in the fact that, if it be adopted, humanity will never become a ruin. It is not the will of God that a life should waste its gold with prodigal hand in the morning and then grope in the shadows of the evening to find now and then a remnant of what it once threw away. "Seek Me early and ye shall find Me," is the cry of heavenly wisdom. The kingdom of God is a kingdom where a child is discovered on the throne. Let him never be taken from it, for Jesus put him there.

These are not pleasant words for a careless parent or Sunday-school teacher to read,—"It were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck and that he were drowned in the depths of the sea."

Tell the young people that the time when character is fixed is during the period when most of them attend Sunday-school. Tell them that ninety-two per cent. of the Christian

Churches in America were gathered into its fellowship before they were twenty-three years of age, and the vast majority before they were sixteen.

When will we teachers realize that a child cannot make progress until it faces in the right direction, and that the time when we turn to face Godward is the greatest hour in any human life? The ignorance at this point on the part of many parents and some teachers is monumental. We talk about religion as if it were a matter of creed and law, of logic and philosophy. As a matter of fact, Christianity is wholly embraced in the words LOVE and LIFE. We make bold to say that a child who is old enough to love and obey his parents is old enough to love and obey God. Teach him that and hold him to it.

As a matter of experience, those who are converted before they are twelve turn out better Christians than those who are converted after they are forty. Spurgeon used to say that he had no end of trouble with those who came into the Church late in life but that he had never lost one who came into the Church in childhood. We would far rather assume responsibility for those who join the Church be-

fore their majority than to assume it for those who join after they have passed that point.

Give the children the results of the statistics presented by Starbuck and Coe and other investigators into the spiritual life of our youth. Remind them of the fact that the soul will reach out for God, and will not be denied, just as the mind reaches out for knowledge and the body for exercise. Teach them that to seek after God is the normal condition of youth just as soon as it reaches the highest point of its nature. Teach them that an ounce of formation is worth a ton of reformation. Open to them the pages of Christian history. Show them Timothy, whose strong and beautiful character had its foundation in the fact exalted by Paul:—"From a child thou hast known the holy Scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus." Remind them of the fact that Polycarp, dying at ninety-five, had served God eighty-six years; that Jonathan Edwards was converted at seven years of age; Isaac Watts at nine; Matthew Henry at eleven and Robert Hall at twelve. Chaplain McCabe was converted at eight years of age and the writer of this article joined the Church at the same age.

Out of seventy-one corporate members of the American Board of Missions "nineteen were converted at so early an age that they were unable to remember it, while thirty-four were led to Jesus before they were fourteen years of age." In a recent canvass of nine hundred Church members, four hundred and eighty-one were converted before they were fifteen years of age.

Such facts as these will go far to create an atmosphere that will be exceedingly helpful to the work of Decision Day, and will impress upon parents and children the importance and propriety of immediate action in the supreme question of life.

XX

DECISION DAY

We must now take it for granted that proper preparation has been made in the school by superintendent and by teachers so that all have an intelligent conception of the importance and the propriety of the day and in order that a spiritually expectant atmosphere may enwrap the school. We also take it for granted that the pastor has preached a clear and forceful sermon on the relation of children to the Christian life, with the result that the thought of parents as well as children has become clarified. That there is a great need of this there can be no question. That there is a religion of childhood just as genuine as the religion of mature age and giving ample play for all the exuberance of the child nature seems never to have occurred to some excellent people.

The writer well remembers when an old Puritan rang the door bell at a home where he saw a boy of twelve or fourteen years of age who had just joined the Church. When the father appeared at the door the Puritan said:

"What are those boys doing on the common yonder?"

"I should think they were playing a game of ball."

"Yes, they are playing ball; and who is that boy throwing the ball?"

"It looks like my boy."

"Yes, it *is* your boy; and I have called you out to show you how much his religion amounts to. How would you know that he is a Christian? He plays just as hard and laughs just as loud as the rest of them."

Poor old man! He did not know any better. However will he get along if he should be fortunate enough to become a citizen of that city where a majority of the inhabitants are little children and which "city shall be full of boys and girls playing in the streets thereof"?

With a clear idea of the application of religion to the child-life we come to the exercise appropriate to Decision Day.

The school will open after the usual manner. Time will be given for the marking of class books, taking collections, and whatever incidental matters are necessary. This is a good time for the teacher to say a few words to the class which shall prepare them mentally

and spiritually for the message which is to follow. We have tried both methods but we strongly incline towards dispensing with the regular lesson. Do not try to hurry through with the lesson with the probable result of overrunning the time and being obliged also to hurry through with the rest of the service. The matter in hand is more important than any single lesson can be. Take time properly to attend to it.

The suggestions which we now desire to give have reference especially to that department of the school known as the junior or intermediate department. The primary department is not yet ready for such services and doubtless has a room to itself. If the senior and the intermediate departments meet in the same room, a slight change of method may be necessary for adults.

When all preliminaries have been attended to have a short season of prayer, but be sure that those who lead know how to pray. Formal or meaningless prayers will utterly destroy the spirit of the meeting and your Pentecost will not come. But if the prayers are truly offered in the Spirit, nothing will go so far towards impressing all hearts that we

are in the very presence of God, that the work in hand is His work, and that we are absolutely dependent upon Him for spiritual results. If there are those in the school who are known and respected as spiritually minded, and who are deeply evangelistic in heart, they are the ones to offer prayer. Don't ask a man to pray because he is old, or wise, or rich, or prominent. Ask only the man or the woman who knows how to talk with God so that God talks back.

After prayer the following method of brief addresses was once tried with great success: The first address was given by a man of much ability and large business success, who was immensely respected by all classes in the city, and who had given his heart to God when but a child. His address was upon the worth and wisdom of the Christian choice. To have such a man in a simple and heart-felt way tell the story of his own life and urge the young people to the choice he had made was most impressive.

The second address was given by a typical Christian mother. She was a woman of culture and social standing, one who had trained her own children in the fear of God and had

seen them enter spheres of wide usefulness. Her appeal was especially to the young ladies. She reminded them of their opportunities and of their temptations. She spoke of the inane and useless life of the worldly and flippant, and told them only Christ could give them adequate incentive and opportunity for a noble and useful life. She spoke with all the yearning of a mother for her own daughter and her appeal was almost irresistible.

Then followed a few heartfelt words from the superintendent expressing his solicitude for every pupil, and the pastor arose asking an immediate decision for Christ. He emphasized the waste and ruin of sin, the need of forgiveness, and the joy and blessedness of the Christian life. He said that youth was the time when all the great questions relating to character and life must be settled and that the hour had now come to make a deliberate choice.

After such an address let the pastor, without any attempt to move upon the emotions of the children, use such methods as he thinks wise to indicate the purpose of the young people. Those who will take Christ as their personal Saviour may be asked to rise. A

moment of silent prayer, with all Christians asked to bow their heads and close their eyes while others are asked to stand for Christ is most impressive. The teacher will gently urge, where it is wise, those who hesitate to make the choice, and then it will be time for the altar service or the inquiry room, with the teacher to lead the way.

It has often happened that a hesitating scholar seeing teacher and associates go forward has felt a strange yearning to go with them and has yielded to that feeling.

Before the service opens suitable cards have been put into the hands of the teachers, sufficient for each class, containing an expression of purpose like the following: "Accepting Jesus Christ as my personal Saviour, I desire henceforth to lead a Christian life." Or that used by Dr. J. Wilbur Chapman: "I do acknowledge Jesus Christ as my Saviour. It is my honest purpose to serve Him all my life."

All the publicity which can be given to this personal choice will be helpful. In the case of children in churches having a probationary system we would urge the addition of a line to that written above on which the parents should write their name as giving con-

sent for the child to come into the church on probation, which act may well be delayed until the step is thoroughly understood by children and parents. Here, then, will be need of a visit by the teacher to the home, as many parents who are not members do not understand the system of probationary training.

The card would then read:

DECISION DAY

CALVARY METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH,
NEW YORK CITY

Accepting Jesus Christ as my personal Saviour, I desire henceforth to lead a Christian life.

Scholar's name . . . . . .

Address . . . . . .

I also desire to be enrolled as a probationer in the church.

I give my consent to such enrollment.

Parent's signature . . . . . .

An impressive close befits such impressive services.

XXI

AFTER DECISION DAY

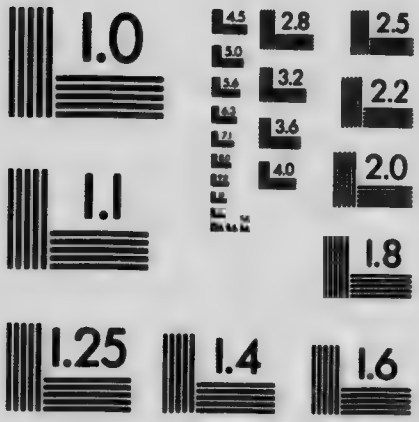
AFTER the new birth comes the new life. A moment is enough for life's beginning, but the growing of a soul should be the holy and happy business of a lifetime. In that the elements and processes of growth are manifold. There is deep philosophy in Dr. Maltbie Babcock's quatrain:

"Back of the loaf is the snowy flour
And back of the flour the mill,
And back of the mill is the wheat and the shower,
And the sun, and the Father's will."

A strong and noble life is the result of orderly consecutive processes. "The kingdom of God cometh not with observation." It is not a night-blooming cereus. You cannot sit down for an hour and watch it come to perfection. It is first but the blade and, after many suns and showers, it is the tasselled ear and, after summer heat and autumn frost, it has paid the price of verdure for the prize of the golden grain. The good Father knew how

MICROCOPY RESOLUTION TEST CHART

(ANSI and ISO TEST CHART No. 2)



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it would be when He placed the voyager Life in the frail shallop of a little seed.

Our business is intelligently and patiently to nourish the seed as it climbs to the altitude of the full corn. Now, we must adapt our teaching to the mental and moral condition of our boys and girls. This is not the period when abstruse theological questions can be settled. The mind is not mature enough for that, and for that matter much of our theological hair-splitting and heresy-hunting is a bootless quest. The period of adolescence is a period of activity and a period of affection. What it is to love and to obey, childhood and youth can understand. It is comparatively easy to teach them what we ourselves need often to recall, that Christianity is not a set of rules first and a life growing out of them. It is first a life, and the only rules worth while are those which have behind them the proof of experience. The child needs to be taught to live up to the best ideals. He will later reason out why such a course is best.

There must be some religious activity in order to develop the religious life of the child. He must have some avenue where he can express in concrete deed his new-found life. In

this great care is necessary. We have no commission to grow a new crop of the "unco' guid" such as went to an early grave in the typical Sunday-school book of a generation ago. Our boys must not only be good but also good for something. Above all things let us teach our youth to be natural in the expression of their religious life. A sanctimonious manner and an assumed tone are almost as bad in the Sunday-school and on the playground as they are in the pulpit. It is likely to play havoc with all genuineness of life and action, and when that is gone there is little left that is worth while. Let no commendation of ours put a premium on the goody goody platitudes of the religious prig. First, last and all the time, let us be genuine. Let us teach our children that anything is better than deception, and let us show them by our example that to be true to one's self is the first law of the Christian life.

This leads me to say that a false notion has crept into the Church, that one temperament is more laudable than another in the Christian life and that certain activities will receive a greater reward than those of another sort. For instance, the ecstatic and emotional is

held to be more spiritual than the practical temperament. The dreamer is always accounted holier than the man of sober deed. It is indeed blessed to see visions and to dream dreams, but dreams that do not eventuate in action will at last enervate and debauch the soul. For some, the Meditations of Thomas à Kempis and the Confessions of Augustine are ideal food, and those who revel in these will be quite sure that a life as practical as that of Luther or Moody is on a much lower spiritual plane, which is distinctly not true. If you will look at the ideal life, that of Jesus, you will find the happy union of many temperaments. It would be difficult to say which one dominated. If you wish for the meditative, you will find Him alone on the mountain and by the sobbing sea. Do you appreciate the emotional? You will find Him weeping over Jerusalem and sobbing in Gethsemane. Are you practical? You will find most of His time spent in doing people good, talking with business men and fishermen, and dining with publicans and sinners. Do you enjoy an argument? You will see Him fighting the brightest men of His day to an intellectual standstill. If you want theology, you can find it in the

Sermon on the Mount and in the conversation with Nicodemus. If devotion appeals to you, see John upon His bosom. Is forgiveness the highest exercise of the soul?—listen as He prays for His murderers and watch Him go hence in the company of a forgiven thief. Try to be as near like Him as you can, and train the young people to a broad view of the Christian life. Help them to realize that the fruit of the Spirit hangs on more than one bough, and that the fruit of every bough comes from the same trunk and was nourished from the same great source. If these things that I am saying can find a lodgment in the hearts of those who train the next generation of Christian workers, we shall be spared much that has mortified the Church, been a barrier against her progress, and caused the enemies of God to blaspheme.

The problem before us is the problem of growth—growth by exercise, growth within and hence growth without. We stand for no rocking-horse or treadmill Christianity. Teach the children that the happiest work in the world is the growing of a Christian character; that it has in it laughter and song as well as stress and struggle; that true religion has as

much for youth as for age, and that the best recipe for a blessed old age is a pure and useful youth. Teach them that the period of the blade and of the tassel is beautiful chiefly because of the prospect of harvest which they are to bear.

No words can properly express the importance of the first conception which our youth receive of their own mission in life. It is a terrible thing to set a limb wrong so that a child becomes a cripple for life, but it is infinitely worse to blunder in the clinics of the soul. We have learned that the best teachers should be employed in the beginning of every science and art so that there should be no occasion to regret many methods which have made the best results impossible. We will therefore be careful, but we will be active and we will be thorough, for the church of twenty years hence is in making now and it will bear the stamp we put upon it. Now plant the mustard seed.

Another important matter to remember is that this growth in the religious life is to be that of a child, not that of a man. We must have patience in our work. In the training of a colt one cut of the whip or ill-tempered yank

of the reins will undo the work of months if it does not ruin the colt. If the child shirks religious duties and does not seem to enjoy God's work, if he gets angry and is not always truthful, it is well to ask, whose child is he, and how came he by such inclinations? Are not some ministers selfish and willful, do not some officials get angry, are there not many church members who seem careless of the truth? Do all official board meetings minister to growth in grace? This is not offered as an apology for unchristian children but simply as a reminder that we must not expect more of them than of the average adult Christian. It is so easy to turn a child out of the way, to say or do something that will plainly show that we have lost patience or confidence, and after that we can do nothing more to help that child. Not only so, but that hasty action will cloud the whole life of the child and make future devotion to Christ and the Church unlikely. Let your scholar think, speak, and act as a child so long as he is one. It will be time enough to put away childish things when he puts on his toga.

XXII

THE DEVELOPMENT OF CHRISTIAN EXPERIENCE

We are now undertaking a work which is not to be accomplished in a day or a year—the building up of a strong, useful, Christian character. The growth of Christian experience is the measure of Christian vitality. Our young people must be taught that the Christian life is not sweetest and strongest at its inception, but that with every passing year it is to become fuller and stronger. We have much to say about experience in religion. Experience and experiment go together. If we do business with God, we shall come to have confidence in Him, and we shall come at length to be like Him. No man can long consort with God without being conscious of the moving of a power within him other than himself and making for righteousness. The general instruction which ought to be given to our young people for the beginning and development of a Christian experience may be summed up in four general divisions.

1. The first relates to the beginning of a Christian life. If one would have an experience in life it goes without saying that life must have its beginning. For the beginning of a Christian life one must go, first of all, to Jesus Christ for the fullness of His atonement and for the peace which can never come to the soul until it has been consciously pardoned. The scientist is certain that life comes not by fortuitous concourse of atoms or from sparks of impinging worlds. It comes from life and from life only. "Ye must be born again." There can be no growth, as we have indicated, until first there is life. Many of our young people are helpless spiritually because they have never known the pulse of a divine life. Ah, teacher, thou art a master in Israel, and it is for thee to know and understand this thing. You prescribe like a physician when the gates of life swing open. Do thorough work. The difference between a robust, noble Christian life and no life at all may depend upon your action. Now, see to it that there is life. The sweetest cry a mother hears is the first faint moan of a new life that she has given to the world. Be not satisfied until you are certain that the Holy Spirit has done His work in leading the

soul out of death unto life in Christ, and another immortal is able to sing in the newness of life:

> "My God is reconciled;
> His pardoning voice I hear."

By pardon we do not mean simply an act for the past but, rather, all that follows a genuine conversion concluding, not in any mystic, marvellous sense, but in the sweet simplicity which the gospel reveals—the witness of the Spirit.

2. Our second thought is that this experience must be buttressed by the Word of God. Here you are certainly at home, and here you must minister as leader and guide. Let the young people fully understand the difference between God's Word and ours. The teaching of men is of little value save as it illustrates and enforces the truths of the Book. Go, then, to the fountain head. Teach the Word of God. Your work will be supplemented by the Holy Ghost. Your pupil will be in condition now to love that to which he was indifferent before. When Southey had written his Life of Wesley, and had shown his failure to appreciate the work of Wesley on its spiritual side, because of

his own spiritual lack, a humble Wesleyan revealed his difficulty in a single sentence: "Sir, thou hast nothing to draw with, and the well is deep." The Spirit will take of the things of God and make them luminous and blessed, but do not fail to show your scholars that the sense in which they need to study the Word of God is the personal rather than the historical or critical sense. What they want is God's message to them. The word of a father to his child. Listen! A father has left his child in a strange land. When he is twenty-one years of age a book which the father has left, containing the ancestry and the future of that child, is to be laid before him. He will find in it the purposes of his father in his life. He will see what plan he is to pursue in order to work out that purpose. All the agencies which will help him will there be set forth. The high dignity to which he is to come if the father's purposes are accomplished, will there be found. What do you think—will the boy read it? It goes without saying that as the time draws near when the mystery of his life shall be unfolded there will be burning cheeks and sleepless nights, and with a hand that will tremble till he can hardly turn the pages, the youth will

open that book of life. Behold, a faint picture of a soul face to face with the Word of God, where all the mystery of his life is unfolded, and the high purposes of God reaching on to the eternities are all set forth. With such a conception of the Book it is not the critic's temper that is needed, but rather the honest prayer: "Open Thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of Thy law." So coming, our youth will be glad to say with Beecher: "It is a living book shooting out rays of light and heat into all the world. He who only knows the print and type of the book knows only a painted sun."

3. The third element in the development of Christian experience is prayer. This is the Christian's vital breath. Because there is so little prayer there is little growth. "For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep." Does prayer avail? Who can answer that question? Certainly not the man who seldom prays. The man who talks most with God knows most about Him. God whispers His secrets to those who talk most confidentially with Him. If it be true that "one could not stand under a porch in a rainstorm for five minutes with Edmund Burke

without feeling that he was in the presence of the greatest man in Europe," what will be the feeling of the man who consorts with the mighty God? Teach the children that prayer is, first of all, communion and fellowship with God. Very much of the teaching in Sunday-school with regard to prayer is likely to make atheists in later life. The children have been taught to ask specific things of God, utterly without regard to the principles which underlie true prayer. If a child thus seeking answers to prayer does not receive them in forms of health, success, or pleasure, a doubt in all prayer is generated which a lifetime will with difficulty overcome. Why not tell the children that prayer is not so much telling God what we want as finding out what His will is concerning us. And when there are hard things to bear, why not show them how prayer will help us? Remind them that it was to prayer that Jesus Christ resorted both as the hope of His life and His special solace in hours of crisis. In all the ages of the Church it has been the thing which has quelled the burning fever of life.

4. As the final thing to be urged upon the young people, let me name attendance upon

the services of the Church and devotion to its work. We do well to remind the children that the Church is not a place where people who think that they are better than others go to congratulate themselves. It is rather a place where those who desire to do well get together to help one another in their holy purpose. The Church is a place for the young people. We have been saying to them for a generation: "Don't! Don't. Don't!" Some time we shall have sense enough to open up to them enjoyments without which there is no adequate recreation, and which will certainly conduce to their spiritual advantage if properly conducted. Christianity is social. There is no such thing as solitary religion. We multiply our experience by sharing it with others, and they become a great help to us by virtue of their sympathy and honesty. The young people who stand by the spiritual work of the Church will themselves grow in grace and will minister marvellously to the development of the same spirit in others. After the tragic death of Maltbie D. Babcock this entry was found on the fly-leaf of his pocket Bible: "Riverdale, N. Y., November 7, 1899. Committed myself again with Christian brothers to unreserved

docility and devotion before my Master." For such a consecration on the part of all our young people each teacher must work and pray; when they have it they will *go to work*, which is the secret of a robust Christian life.

XXIII

SUMMER EVANGELISM IN TOWN AND COUNTRY

THE summer campaign as conducted in gospel tents in New York, Brooklyn, Philadelphia and other of our chief cities last year proved itself successful beyond the expectations of its friends and promoters in reaching the unchurched in the great centres of urban life. This success leads me to suggest the application of the same principle in modified form to church activities in small towns and cities and throughout the rural communities of our great land.

Important as is the problem how to reach the masses in the plague spots of the world, it is hardly second to the problem of reaching the manufacturing and agricultural communities which fringe our streams and cluster in our valleys. Foreigners in our cities ask the pastors of our village churches, Who have taken the places of those native-born New Englanders who have gone from farm and factory to the stores of the East, and the great ranches of the West? Is the objection offered

that Protestantism has nothing for them and that they must be left to Romanism or more exactly to agnosticism, infidelity, and materialism, which is the legitimate swing of the pendulum from the bigotry and ecclesiasticism which cursed them in Spain, Portugal, and Italy, Bulgaria, and Syria? The answer to that is an emphatic negative. Why are we sending missionaries to Roman Catholic countries if there is no hope of reaching Roman Catholics with the blessed gospel of the new birth and salvation through faith in Jesus Christ without the intervention of priest or pope? As a matter of fact the time is ripe for a great movement to bring the dawn to many honest souls who are groping for the light and praying to be delivered from the bondage of priestcraft and superstition. They have the same desire which Savonarola and Luther voiced, and many of them are as truly spiritual at heart as were Francis of Assisi or the sweet Faber.

Is it not time we had missions to non-Protestants in every city and village in our country? There is a great movement on foot already among the thoughtful of the Roman Church.

Another reason for the work I am about to urge is the growing godlessness of those who till the soil. They live remote from church privileges and from the beginning to the end of the year there is little or nothing to remind them of God and duty. There is little effort made to reach them and they are likely to become brothers to the sod they turn. There is something about the country agricultural life which narrows the soul of those who do not seek the help which comes from religion. It is a famous fact of social life that the class among which there is the largest ratio of insanity is to be found upon the farms of New England and the Middle West.

There is a pagan New England that needs to have the gospel brought to it, and for such work there will be a blessed return. Among the methods which have approved themselves even by a limited and partial trial are the following:

I. Preaching on village commons and in country parks. In many of our cities the leading preachers have taken up the work of Sunday afternoon preaching in the parks. Unitarianism will not be charged with being evangelistic, but the foremost Unitarian preach-

ers of Boston go to the Common and preach during the summer months. It would work a revolution in church methods and results if in every town and city of about five thousand inhabitants the ablest preachers of the town, Congregationalists, Episcopalians, Baptists, Methodists, every denomination, would go to the park or common accompanied by their best singers, quartet, and soloists, and strengthened by the presence of some of their leading members, give those who gather an earnest gospel message as thoughtful, beautiful, and eloquent as any they preach in their churches. Nothing brings religion more into disrepute among the class where we can least afford to have it discredited than the fact that we have largely left open-air preaching to those who are so *outré* and ill-balanced that no church would open its doors to them—men whose words and actions alike condemn them in the mind of all sensible listeners. That is the only gospel that many men of the street hear. Small wonder that we cannot get them into our churches. When the Church has been humiliated sufficiently by the awful fact of her impotency in face of the community's need, when our preachers have reached the

point where an empty church becomes at last a mortgaged church, and later an auction room or a theatre, we may be willing to swallow our foolish pride, relic of old conditions, and conquer our indolence and do as much to win a soul as an insurance agent would do to sell a policy. A part of the village problem may be solved on the common by the best preachers, and every humblest lover of God may help by bringing to the service those who will not go to church.

II. The village tent, where the size and constituency of the town will warrant it, preferably on some public square or small park, is an agency of incalculable good. As one rides through a town at 7 or 8 P. M. in the summer he sees a street full of loafers. Most of them are aimless. They will go to the saloon or beer garden, not because they care very much about drink, but because it is the only place where there is anything going on. A patent-medicine vender with a sleight-of-hand performance will get a crowd of scores and even hundreds of men—just the persons the Church is anxious to reach. A tent where entertainment and religious instruction are combined will keep hundreds

from gambling and drunkenness and save the young men from the vile language and vile suggestions which always come to the front where the merry, the lazy, and the dissolute congregate.

Almost every one likes music. Let them have a chance to hear it, and to sing themselves. Get a talking machine if you have no available soloist. If you want to fill your tent put in for song records: "Suwanee River" and "America" and "Home, Sweet Home." Then it will be safe to put in "Nearer, My God, to Thee" and "Jesus, Lover of My Soul."

Almost every one likes pictures. Use a stereopticon and use the best pictures to be had. The people will be interested in pictures of home and foreign lands, and these can be followed by pictures of the land of Jesus, and this will be a good chance to tell of the great things that happened by Gennesaret, on Carmel and Calvary. After that the consecrated, level-headed Christian gentleman who is running the tent, and who is a man and not a monk, can say: "My friends, you have heard and seen some pleasant and interesting things. You have saved your

money which you might have squandered in a saloon, and you have preserved your self-respect, which you might have lost at your cups. If you have had a pleasant and profitable time we are abundantly repaid. It would be a fitting thing to close a pleasant evening with a prayer of thanks to Him who gives us all our blessings, and if any of you would like to seek His pardon for the past and His help for the future, that would make joy in earth and heaven." Would you object to a service like that?

III. Grove meetings. A few camp meetings are still held, but are too remote for general patronage by the countryside, and they do not in all cases meet the need for which they were first designed. Almost every town has its grove—in some cases a private grove, in other cases a picnic-ground adjunct of some electric-car route. In the latter case the crowd is present, in the former case a note, or, better still, a private invitation by some pastor or church worker would bring the farmers and their families for miles around. Sunday is a lazy day on the farm. In most cases in a Christian community the restraint is sufficient to keep men from openly plowing the field or

gathering their hay. They do a few chores and sit around. The children are not at school nor at work, and the time hangs heavily on their hands. To walk or drive to a beautiful grove on the shore of the lake and hear good singing, meet their friends and listen to an earnest, heart-felt talk, would be a welcome change and have in it the greatest possibilities for good. Here the country pastor could get acquainted with those whom he would not otherwise meet. He would get an invitation to call at the house, and when he called, as he certainly should, he could give them an invitation to return the call at the church, and we know from personal experience that it would be done. If it is delayed we call again.

IV. A most helpful adjunct for village and country work is a gospel wagon, seats for six, —a driver, the preacher, and a quartet to sing. If the driver or the preacher can play the cornet so much the better. With such a wagon two or three factory villages or school districts can be reached each Sunday afternoon. It will touch the hearts of those who cannot go to the village church ; it will remind every listener of the earnestness of the Church

to reach those who need the help of the gospel; it will pay rich dividends to the hearts of those who at the cost of self-denial and weariness follow in His footsteps who went about doing good. It was He who came to seek and to save those that were being lost.

Dr. W. J. Dawson tells the sad but thrilling story of Charles Peace, who attained an infamous fame in England a few years ago as burglar and murderer, a man who seemed to be absolutely depraved in every part. As he was being led to the scaffold to expiate his crimes under human law, the prison chaplain offered him what are called "the consolations of religion"; the wretched man turned upon him and said, "Do you believe it? Do you believe it? If I believed that I would crawl across England on broken glass on my hands and knees, to tell men it was true."

Let every pastor in every town and hamlet as well as in every city be well assured that when he goes up to his chamber for the last time nothing in all his life will seem quite so much worth while as the effort he has made to carry the gospel to those who did not seek it, and but for him would have died without the knowledge of its saving power.

XXIV

EVANGELISTIC BIOGRAPHY

I AM glad to confess myself incalculably indebted to Christian biography. As the trophies of Miltiades stirred every Greek to emulate his example, so the devotion of the heroes of the cross is a constant challenge to my soul. The Bible itself is the greatest biography of spiritual heroes, and there is no phase of the strength or weakness of mankind that it does not touch upon. After one has read the inspired r[illegible]d of their achievements, he will feel like a [illegible]nberer of the ground if he, too, does not strip off his weights and pluck up his spirit. He will be fain to adopt the words of him who watched the holy martyrs of the eleventh of Hebrews troop by: "Therefore let us also, seeing we are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus the author and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, de-

spising shame, and hath sat down at the right hand of the throne of God."

Next to the heroes of the Bible, in point of devotion as well as time, come the saints and martyrs of the early Church. A little time spent in the study of those brave days which saw the founding of the Christian faith in every centre of civilization will quicken our feet to carry the gospel in our time to every heathen community. The principle of devotion which was there exemplified is the same that we must illustrate. The spirit which made the aged Polycarp cry in face of fagot and chain, "Eighty and six years have I served Him. Why should I forsake Him now?" will lay hold of us in the hour of indifference and make heroic sacrifice a delight. The story of the brave days when Perpetua went to the lions, when mountain fastnesses echoed with the triumphant song of the persecuted, when Rome was fairly undermined by those who dug and worshipped and died in the catacombs, and when Nero at midnight drove to his palace through avenues illuminated by torches, every one of which was a Christian martyr in his winding sheet of flame—such records as these will make real to us the human sacrifice which is always neces-

sary in one form or another if men shall be greatly moved to holy emprise, and the faith which was founded through such devotion we will sustain by like heroic zeal.

I am not so particular to name the heroes of the ages as I am to inspire an interest in the whole field of Christian biography which will send every lover of the Church to the crimsoned pages of her history to find his own heroes and to make immortal in his own life that splendid sacrifice by which the blood of the martyrs bec.. o the seed of the Church.

Every age nas had its martyrs to the spirit of evangelism and each student will find in the famous or the obscure that which appeals to his own soul and begets within him an unconquerable heroic purpose.

If one has the spirit of the reformer let him hark back to the days of the evangelist of Florence. Let him recall the setting of the stage on which Savonarola played his part. He will have for a background Lorenzo, the Humanists, the smoke of unholy books, and the acclaim of the penitent crowd; and, standing outlined against it all, the stern prophet separated from the Church militant by papal bull crying in holy joy, "Not from the Church tri-

umphant, with that the Pope has nothing to do." It ought to be easier after such a vision to bear the test of any market place and face any human excommunication.

It is not far from Savonarola to Luther, a man of like passion with ourselves, but ah, if we could gain a like steadfastness. Before the sovereigns of half the world with knights and nobles in gleaming armour he stands almost alone. A steeled baron touches him with his gauntlet and says, "Pluck up thy spirit, little Monk. I have seen hard battles in my day but nor I nor any knight in this company ever needed a stout heart more than thou needst it now. If thou hast faith in these doctrines of thine, little Monk, go on." Hear Luther saying in holy resolve: "Here I stand, I can do no other, God help me!" Here we have in a single sentence the Iliad of all the martyrs. I like to hear the echo of his prayers at Erfurt and the echo of his hammer at Wittenburg and the crash of the bottle aimed at the devil in Wartburg Castle. Higher criticism will doubtless feel itself free to maintain that it was rats and not the devil that invaded the good man's room, but there is little question that Luther having faced so many of the

devilish, thought it perfectly reasonable that the father of liars might be close at hand. But the thing that counts is that, being persuaded that the arch fiend in bodily presence was over against him, he did not tremble and he did not run, but took the instrument nearest at hand and "had at him." It takes a stout heart even in our time to throw an ink bottle at the devil, whether you throw it all at once or drop by drop from a trenchant pen.

England is the home of heroes who have dared and died for Christ's sake, and every man in whose veins is English blood owes it to himself to stand by his heritage. From the days of Wickliffe to the fagots and gallows of Tyburn and Oxford, men have sealed their faith with their lives, and others like Bunyan were "had home to prison" for the love they bore their Lord, and preachers of the gospel like Whitefield and the Wesleys were hooted and mobbed, but they "bated not a jot of heart or hope."

Across the border in Scotland is the record of an innumerable company of evangelistic martyrs. Here is Knox who will not tremble even before a bigoted and wicked queen. "I have looked into the faces of angry men and

was not terrified above measure; why should I fear the face of a gentle woman?" Hear him crying in the passion of a yearning soul, "Give me Scotland or I die." Will the world ever cease to remember the brave days of the Covenanters and the heroes who preceded them? It was of Hamilton that the enemies of the Church said, "If any more are burned, burn them in cellars," for they feared that the smoke of their sacrifice would be a winding sheet for those who had kindled the fire. My soul has often been fired by the sight of Margaret Wilson fastened to a stake where the tide of Galway is creeping up till at last the flood-tide brought to her spirit the glorious epiphany of her Lord. The names of Hugh McKail, of James Guthrie, of all the heroes of the "Grass Market" and "The Killing Time," ought to inspire every evangelist with an unconquerable purpose to be himself a burning and a shining light.

America has her own evangelistic Valhalla in whose high halls is enshrined the memory of those kindred spirits who "counted not their own lives dear unto themselves." Some of those heroes we know and some are nameless now. We reap where they sowed and the

fields which knew their sweat and blood and now enshrine their dust, blossom in our behalf like the garden of the Lord. They were humble itinerant preachers, and rough but consecrated laymen, and this request, made by a Church of a Bishop, was typical of the conditions they had to face. "Send us a man who can swim, the last preacher you sent was drowned crossing a swollen river in the early spring." Read the Journals of Asbury, the Life of Peter Cartwright, the life-story of the Christian settlers of the Northwest and then take up the biographies of those great names that never die: Edwards, Finney, Judson, Brainard, Paton, Bishop Taylor, Moody and a score of others, most of whom are fallen on sleep but whose works follow them. It is true that all this would make a library that would take years to properly study, but I ask that every one who is the heir of the evangelistic ages shall know enough about the men who made those ages on understand the price they paid, so that they may not shrink from similar sacrifices. That must be a sodden torch that will not kindle in such a flame.

XXV

THE EVANGELISTIC REWARD

It remains to speak a final word concerning the result of the high endeavour which this book seeks to urge. During an address before a large body of pastors I was asked if I did not think the course I had recommended was a toil some way and one in which the pastor would soon become fatigued and nervously exhausted. While I had to admit that the plan to which I was committed would be as strenuous and exhausting physically as any man would care to undertake, I asked the question, "Which would be the more likely to induce mental and nervous bankruptcy; to work until one was conscious of having physically done his best but to go home at the close of a service so happy that sleep was hardly possible because of the exaltation of spirit over sinners coming home to God and men and women gladly giving allegiance to the blessed Christ; or to spend one's time in thinking of some plan to escape from a losing cause and a dying Church and devising some scheme whereby one could

be saved from the mortification and disaster of an ecclesiastical undoing." I submit that nothing is so likely to prolong life and to multiply its joys as the return which comes from self-denying evangelistic toil.

The great evangelistic reward is not seen in the comfort or advancement of the pastor nor in the improved financial condition of those whom he seeks to bring to God nor in the increased revenue of the Church and all charitable institutions and causes. Here is the result as God looks at it. "Let him know that he who converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death and shall cover a multitude of sins." If that be true we are quite prepared to give our assent to the declaration of the Wise Man, "He that winneth souls is wise." The work is so important that God sent the only Son He had upon this errand. The wisdom of it and the joy of it were so great that He despised the shame and the pain of it and the ages have measured Him by His success in that work and bring the crown of universal dominion and fit it to His brow. When He came to give His last message to the waiting Church which was to found His kingdom and usher in His reign these were

its words, "Go ye therefore and make disciples of all the nations," and it was only in that occupation that they had the right to expect the fulfillment of His promise, "Lo I am with you always even unto the end of the world."

There is great force in the words of Dr. Torrey: "I would like to ask what right any man has to call himself a follower of Jesus Christ if he is not a soul-winner? There is absolutely no such thing as following Christ unless you make the purpose of Christ's life the purpose of your life."

A great change has taken place in the emphasis that the pew puts upon the pulpit. The man with a message is the man the people go to hear. The common people are setting the pace in this as they have in every other reformation that has shaken the world. They have sense enough to know that face to face with sinning and dying men and women, nothing else is worth while. Bishop McDowell says, "A fine woman came home from one of the finest Churches in New York and said: 'It was well enough in every respect save one: it did not matter.' The seed was so poor that it was not worth the planting."

Many of the most polished and literary

preachers among us have seen a vision and will no longer be satisfied with the old colourless, meaningless life. A new joy is filling their soul and life is throbbing under the ribs of death. One sermon under the new inspiration has more of holy triumph in it than was found in a year under the old conditions. Empty pews are filling up. Perpendicular wrinkles are changing to horizontal ones. The frost is off the window pane, the refrigerator is become an incubator, the pump-handle has become an arm of flesh with a brother's warm grasp at the end of it. A better day is dawning, when preachers shall no longer be satisfied with a round of heartless ministrations, but will weep day and night till the victory comes in the salvation of the people. Such service will bring rewards which are unspeakable and endless.

I rejoice that the pulpit of Henry Ward Beecher and Lyman Abbott has in it a man of evangelistic trend and prophetic mould. Listen to the burning words of Dr. Hillis:

"They tell us there are a million folk in the palaces and hovels of New York that never cross the threshold of a Church—Catholic or Protestant—and forty millions in the land.

Verily the Church is encamped on the edge of a dark continent of worldliness and selfishness and pleasure and sin. Through the air comes the old sweet searching command, shivering through us like a trumpet call, 'Oh, to die for men's souls! And live to win their lives! Here and now let us forswear ease.' Ease will come yonder. Here and now let us perchance postpone culture—there will be time for that there. One passion ours,—to spread the evangel. One purpose,—to gather in our multitude out of the wilderness and lead them towards the shining city. Enough for us that for the broken-hearted and the sinful we have shown the path that leads to the Christ, who is indeed the heart of Christianity and religion,—a great, dear Person, standing with outstretched hands."

What marvelous rewards come daily to the heart of the evangelistic pastor, and to the layman who is a winner of souls. Wherever he journeys he has blessed company. The beautiful words of Uhland's *Passage* are his:

> "Take, oh, boatman, thrice thy fee,
> Take, I give it willingly,
> For unseen by thee
> Spirits twain have crossed with me."

He is getting old now and the high exploits of the great days of his prime gladden his heart no more. But a stranger greets him and says, as a man said the other day to an old preacher in New England, "Do you remember me?" "My eyes are not as good as they used to be, and I forget so easily," said the old man. But the other answered, "Do you remember how John ——— was converted under your ministry forty years ago?" "Oh, yes, John, I shall remember that as long as I live," and John replies, "All I am and hope to be I owe under God to you. Let me tell you how I love you." And they wind their arms about each other's neck—Paul and Timothy. Such an hour is worth a lifetime of toil; but Daniel lifts the curtain of the future and writes like the seer that he is: "And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament, and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever." Strange that a little light should blaze so high and shine so far, but so it is in the kingdom of God. It was only two mites and a widow, 1,900 years ago and seven thousand miles away, but still it shines like a con-

stellation and thousands call her wise who never called a star by name.

What has been your labour under the sun and what have you to show for it? If fame was the object and we won it, we found how empty it is and how soon men are forgotten. The files of the newspapers of a decade ago are filled with names that no man speaks to-day. If we have sought for wealth we have found it hard to win and easy to lose and a bitter thing to hold if it has been won at the cost of truth and love. All these end here. It is threnody and thanatopsis and we go out empty handed, and the mourners go about the streets. But if we have never had the things that men covet we may yet go hence in peace.

When we go up to our chamber for the last time only one thing will count. Rutherford knew what it was when he sang:

> "If one soul from Anworth
> Meet me at God's right hand
> My heaven will be two heavens
> In Emanuel's land."

There is but one business which is worth while. To undertake it the throne of heaven was emptied that the mansions of heaven

might be filled. It challenged the Son of God and consumed Him with its passion and there is nothing so godlike among men. No rewards are so great as those which it offers and they will shine with unabating brilliancy when suns and systems are no more. "He that winneth souls is wise."

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